

The Experiences of Refugee single mothers during the Covid-19 pandemic in the Ottawa Region

Ontario, Canada.

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents some findings from refugee single mothers living in Ottawa, Canada, exploring their employment experiences and experiences as single mothers during the Covid-19 period. It also covers how to generate evidence to guide policy development, considering the access to resources and refugee single mothers' financial stability, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. My analysis draws on six interviews with refugee single mothers. It shows that all refugee single mothers faced a difficult situation during the pandemic and post-pandemic, especially in getting employment, providing necessities for the family and caring for their children. Finally, the paper presents a theoretical and conceptual framework empirically grounded in an innovative qualitative methodological design to capture the complexities of the research, using participants' narratives as the empirical material.

Keywords: Covid-19, Pandemic, Refugee, Single Mother, Migrants, employment

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CERB – Canada Emergency Response Benefits

CRA - Canada Revenue Agency

GAR - Government-Assisted Refugees

IAB - Interactive Advertising Bureau

ICAP - In-Canada Asylum Program

IFHP - Interim Federal Health Program

ILP - Immigration Loans Program

IRB - Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

IRCC - Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada

PSR - Privately Sponsored Refugees

RAP - Resettlement Assistance Program

RHRP - Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program

SSP - Shared Sponsorship Programs

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

YWCA - Young Women's Christian Association

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Context and Rationale

In the last three years, the Covid-19 pandemic has been one of the most frightening and deadly events to hit the world. More than 3,964,154 cases and 42,037 deaths of COVID-19 have been reported in Canada since the deadly virus outbreak (Center for Systems Science and Engineering, 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic creates a double emergency for refugees - in avoiding contracting the virus on the one hand and continuing to access basic needs and livelihoods on the other (Kirisici *et al.*, 2020). In addition, the lockdowns left many refugees, especially refugee claimant workers who may already have limited protection from the virus, with a loss of economic means, which increases their grievances and insecurity, including sexual and gender-based violence (Bobrow, 2020; Choi, Byoun & Kim, 2020).

More than half of these refugees and asylum seekers are women, including single mothers and caregivers who often raise their children alone in Canada (Radey, Langenderfer-Magruder & Speights, 2021). In Canada, refugee single mothers have been impacted by the pandemic in multiple ways, including seeing it as an opportunity to improve their children's education. In addition, students new to Canada often lack the language and resources needed to navigate and access education and other support systems. For instance, in 2022, compared to the prior years, Canada's actual gross domestic product was 18.2 percent lower (Frenette, Handler & Messacar, 2020). Even though not equally, this economic decline directly impacted individuals in Canada, with both short- and long-term repercussions (Edmonds & Flahault, 2021).

The refugee population is one group of Canadian residents severely affected by the health pandemic. Specifically, although many single mothers could be said to be facing increased economic risk and uncertainty without the pandemic, these vulnerable populations were affected by Covid-19 economic shocks and are likely to be susceptible to the difficulties of modern life (Zivot *et al.*, 2022). Refugee single mothers in Canada, for instance, have experienced several significant social and employment changes during the pandemic and low access to job opportunities during the pandemic. Firstly, they have had to reassess their work/life balance significantly and the impact these changes have on their well-being.

Consequently, raising a family is difficult enough for two parents, but it is even more difficult for single parents struggling to make ends meet (Choi, Byoun & Kim, 2020). Moreover, Choi, Byoun & Kim (2020) further reiterated that due to Covid-19, single mothers in Canada were likelier to be absent from the workplace, affecting their income and exposing them to economic hardship. Thus, single women in Canada without access to jobs were likely to be the most vulnerable, contributing to diminished well-being.

The research will highlight refugee single mothers' difficulties in Ottawa and present recommendations for overcoming the plight. It will improve the conditions of work among refugee single mothers that could sustain and improve their living standards while at the same time increasing employability in Canada. In addition, it will also capture and addresses how the pandemic impacted the opportunities and quality of jobs available and increased the exploitation faced by refugee single mothers in Ottawa, Canada, as well as the provisions that will be made available for refugee single mothers for future occurrence of any pandemic in terms of their well-being, employability and financial stability.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Various reasons would necessitate a single mother to flee her country to start all over in a completely new environment with a new culture and language, among others. In an ideal situation, a refugee single mother is fleeing her homeland to escape challenges, including but not limited to family persecution, war and conflicts. However, considering the opinion of previous studies such as Dalexis and Cénat (2020), being a new immigrant comes with many challenges that refugee single mothers have suffered while trying to adapt to their new environment. The adaptation process, known as acculturation, may not successfully lead to psychological distress.

Considering the issue of refugee single mothers in Canada, especially during the Covid-19 period, and my personal experience as a single mother, it suffices to assume that the experiences of refugee single mothers as related to employment opportunities are not desirable. A pilot interview conducted in the build-up of this study suggested that many refugee single mothers are happy to be in Canada as they have successfully escaped the persecution and social unrest in their homeland. However, they face new challenges while striving to make a living in their new environment. Some of the challenges identified can be summarized as exclusion and exploitation. On this note, this study was structured to carry out an empirical investigation that will highlight the real-life experience of refugee single mothers and provide realizable recommendations to help alleviate their plight.

1.3 Positionality of the Researcher

Positionality is the term used to describe a researcher's social environment, past experiences, and theoretical attitude within specific research situations (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). As a researcher, it was significant for me to recognize how my positionality as a refugee single mother

will likely affect my explanation and reflect on it through all stages of the qualitative research study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The purpose of stating the researcher's positionality is to enable the reader to evaluate the impact of the researcher's personal experience and viewpoints concerning the study population and the research motivation.

My position as an insider researcher would help me relate better with fellow refugee single mothers by helping me recognize the similarities and possible differences between my experience and theirs. Moreover, the participants will likely feel free to discuss their experiences with me as fellow refugee single mothers. For example, during the interviews, some participants kept saying, "I believe you get what I mean." Therefore, in this thesis, I seek to examine the experiences of other refugee single mothers in Ottawa regarding job prospects and how these prospects are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The thesis outcome gives the researcher excellent knowledge of the topic and other stakeholders, such as the government and community.

Being a refugee, in general, can be a very tough experience, not to mention being a refugee who is a single mother. I could not hold a stable job during my first few years in Canada. It supports the argument of Bobrow (2020), who reported that in the disrupted service industries like hospitality and retail, single mothers are disproportionately represented, and among those fortunate enough to preserve their jobs, they are disproportionately affected as essential employees with insufficient childcare facilities. Unlike some of the friends I made who already had permanent status, which allowed them to plan their daily routine efficiently, I had to wait until I was called to come to work. Sometimes, I would decline when called because I did not have babysitting or daycare services. At that point, I felt hopeless about securing a job and improving my life, as I did not have support physically from my family members because they were not in Canada. I would always think of what to do and ask myself questions like, Is my child ok or safe? Where can I leave

my child? And even when a neighbour said she would help, I did not get jobs within the hours she offered to assist me in caring for my child.

As time passed, I became a certified Yoruba language interpreter in Ontario. The job gave me first-hand experience with people who do not understand what the doctor says about their health or prescription due to a lack of understanding of the Canadian health system and the language barrier. Although I was still a certified interpreter in Ontario, my professionalism was ignored when applying for some jobs because I was a refugee. As a result, I lacked the needed support and backups to explore all the pertinent insights for my career success. One of my incredible experiences was applying for an Interpreter position with the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB). Unfortunately, I could not get the job because I was a refugee. Even though I was a conventional refugee, it did not still matter. I was not allowed to have a formal interview because of my status. In contrast, a friend who never had any interpretation experience got the job because she had permanent status in Canada.

I finally got my life together piece by piece, but before I knew it, I had to stop working due to Covid-19, as my daughter had no daycare services. As a refugee single mother in Ottawa before and during the pandemic, I have faced difficulties, even presently, as I write. However, I do not want to be biased as my experience may differ from other women; hence, I must hear from them. Similarly, at home, you may have had to make difficult decisions regarding your family and home, and you may have felt powerless in the face of them. You may have become angry, frustrated, sad and hurt. You may have felt like you had no support. You may have blamed yourself for what had happened.

As a single parent, I faced many challenges in my daily life. Some were social, such as maintaining a solid relationship with my daughter when she was young and our isolation during the pandemic. Others were financial, such as paying for childcare and ensuring my daughter could still receive her government assistance, food purchases, gas purchase and many more. It was a challenge, but I would not have wanted it any other way because it helped me build a deeper self-understanding, which improved my family life, mental health, and confidence. From my personal experience, just a few months after I entered Canada as a refugee, I experienced different forms of exploitation and discrimination in my search for a house to rent. In searching for a place, different agents (Janitors in Montreal content) took a deposit from me, knowing full well that the house owners would not rent their house to me because I was a refugee with no job and a single mother. These experiences greatly affected me physiologically; in most cases, I always feel sober to narrate my ordeals. I was also exploited by someone who gave me a contract to clean the space for him because I explained that I had cleaning experience. He made me clean some rooms he was managing as a janitor claiming he would pay me at the end of the month, which did not eventually happen. When I asked for my pay, he said he was not paid yet and could not pay me. He kept giving me several excuses that I had to let go of my pay and stopped working for him, which was very painful considering the time, effort, and money lost for having to pay a babysitter to watch my daughter while I was working. I learned from his other workers that he had been paid for the job before we started working because the space owner wanted things done quickly. The other workers even got paid, but he did not pay me because he felt I could not report him to anyone, which was what happened. Although my experience brought about my interest in the topic, questions and objectives of the thesis, it is separated when conducting interviews with other single refugee mothers.

1.4 Research Question

Considering my personal experience and the pilot interview conducted in the build-up of this study. The broad question that was answered by this study was to examine how the Covid-19 pandemic influenced the experiences of refugee single mothers in Ottawa regarding access to material and social rights provisions. The specific questions to be considered are thus;

1. How did the Covid-19 pandemic influence access to income necessary for acquiring the basic needs and material needs resulting from opportunities and quality of jobs available for refugee single mothers?
2. How did the Covid-19 pandemic influence the employment services rendered to refugee single mothers regarding increased exploitation faced by single refugee mothers in Ottawa, Canada?
3. What future provisions need to be made available for single refugee mothers regarding their well-being, employability, and financial stability to alleviate the issue of social exclusion and exploitation?

1.5 Research Objectives

These research objectives are to establish and examine the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on refugee single mothers' experiences and determine the most efficient and effective method through which sufficient resources and financial stability can be provided to refugee single mothers in Canada.

Consequently, this study aims to generate evidence to guide policy development, considering the past and present Canada's views on refugee policies. The Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), which is part of the federal government, is in charge of immigration regulations

and strategies. In addition, the IRCC is responsible for maintaining Canada's economic, social, and political well-being while overseeing one of the most significant and extensive immigration systems in the world (Government of Canada, 2021). "Also, IRCC and its partners also strive to undertake background checks on potential permanent and temporary immigrants to ensure Canadians are safe and healthy. In general, the major purpose of the Department is to "help immigrants assimilate to Canada's way of life and economy and to empower and work with Canadian citizenship." (Government of Canada, 2021.)

Depending on your immigration status, you may be entitled to various services, such as aid with housing, finding a job, and learning a new language. In the last many years, Canada's immigration regulations have grown less clear (Goldring, 2010). An unstable status has several implications. First, an unstable status will not allow one to work legally in Canada. Second, one would not have the right to stay in the country forever (a home license) and have the social citizenship rights that long-term residents have (like education and health care) or the right to be in Canada without relying on an outsider (like a supporting life partner or representative) (Roberts, 2020).

When one family member has unstable status, kids and other relatives are in danger of deep social isolation that might lead to detrimental social and health impacts (Sandstrom & Huerta, 2013). In 2009, one in every 34 Canadians had a hazardous immigration status. It meant that roughly 1 million Canadians were only there briefly. Based on the legislation now in place, many women fall within this category, mainly if they arrived in Canada via marriage or spousal sponsorship. Refugees may be eligible for additional financial aid during their first year in Canada. However, late settlers have overtaken programs with substantial wait periods and insufficient support. Human dignity is at stake here, but so are the kids, who are at a higher risk of awful things occurring to them in the future because their parents are unstable, needy, and wounded.

It is a crisis that has the potential to be a tremendous financial opportunity for the country. Due to the pandemic, refugee single mothers face a greater need for financial support. The World Bank has implemented various programs to assist the most vulnerable in refugee camps. The World Bank has also created a research project to aid refugee single mothers in shelters (Dempster *et al.*, 2020). Even though there are a lot of significant government assistance programs targeted at refugees, such as the resettlement assistance program (RAP), through which the Government of Canada assists resettled refugees to establish themselves in their new homes. Other programs include health assistance through the interim federal health program (IFHP) and financial aid through the immigration loans program (ILP). Although these programs, among others, are supposed to help all refugees, including refugee single mothers, the extent to which opportunities from these programs and the quality of jobs are available to refugee single mothers in Ottawa, Canada and the impact of increased exploitation remains understudied (Dempster *et al.*, 2020).

1.6 Significance of the study

As one of the world's top destinations for refugee resettlement, Canada's refugee population in 2020 was 129 145, which is expected to increase significantly by 2022 (The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Global Trends, 2020). Therefore, I consider this study essential because it will likely connect and enhance the existing framework of enlightenment regarding refugee single mothers' challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic and how they could be addressed in future similar occurrences. In addition, the study results will also provide a valid reference document to the government on the plight of refugee single mothers during and after the pandemic.

This study will be helpful to refugee single mothers in Canada in that they can identify coping strategies that may prove beneficial in surviving pandemic hardships. Furthermore, the findings

from this research could also be applied to providing a better living experience for refugee single mothers during an economic recession. Moreover, this study will help other professionals and human rights activists to be in a position to advise on being realistic as a refugee single mother about what they can and can't accomplish and set priorities. With refugee single-mother counselling, gaining the lost trust and confidence occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic in a foreign country is possible. Lastly, this study will provide background information to other researchers and scholars who would like to investigate more on the impact of the pandemic on the employment services for refugee single mothers.

1.7 Research Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research method. Savin-Baden and Major (2013) stated that qualitative research involves using non-numerical data such as text, video and audio to analyze and derive an understanding of concepts, opinions, or experiences. This study utilized qualitative methods because the focus was to examine and describe the experiences of refugee single mothers (Paudyal, Tattan and Cooper, 2021). Therefore, a semi-structured interview was conducted with six (6) refugee single mothers to understand how the pandemic impacts the opportunities and quality of jobs available and increases the exploitation faced by refugee single mothers in Ottawa, Canada. In this research, I will try to understand the experiences refugees face, particularly women.

Furthermore, the study adopted a narrative method, one of the qualitative approaches to research. The narrative method is a qualitative research design used to explore the lives and experiences of individuals, groups, or organizations (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The choice of this method was to give participants room to express themselves and give full details and exposure to their experience. Interviews were used as a sub-method to obtain data, analyze and interpret this research's findings.

1.8 Thesis Structure

This study aimed to investigate the experiences of refugee single mothers during the Covid-19 pandemic in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. The study is structured into six (6) chapters to provide a detailed report. Chapter one discussed the research topic, goals, and objectives. Next, it outlines the study's background and rationale and the researcher's position within the study. Finally, it briefly explained each chapter in the thesis and the methodology adopted. Chapter two outlined the literature review related to the concepts and variables studied. It also captures the literature associated with the topic with the main focus. It provided a definition of refugee, types of refuge, refugee policies in Canada, the effect of these policies in Canada and the experiences of the refugee single parents in Ottawa, Canada. The third chapter highlighted the theoretical and conceptual framework that served as the foundation for the study. It considered the social exclusion theory as related to the variables, thereby conceptualizing the framework for the study. Chapter four of the study detailed the techniques and methods adopted to support the research design. The research design addresses the study paradigm, data collecting and analytic procedures, validity, reliability, reflexivity, and ethical consideration. Chapter five presented the result of the study, the analysis, and the discussion. It also combines the core findings with the literature review to create a critical synthesis. Chapter six, the last chapter, provided the conclusions and recommendations of the study with reference to the findings.

1.9 Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the refugee community in Canada. In general, refugees should receive assistance without discrimination. However, some refugees still have difficulties receiving aid. For example, refugee single mothers in Canada have undergone several noteworthy changes due to the pandemic. The findings of this study will emphasize the challenges

experienced by refugee single mothers and offer advice. It could be used as a reference document for the conditions of refugee single moms during and after the pandemic. Furthermore, the study will benefit refugee single mothers in Canada, as they can develop coping skills to help them survive pandemic hardships.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review as related to the concepts relevant to the study. The chapter also summarized the review and highlighted a gap in the literature the study intends to fill.

2.2 Canadian Context on Refugee and Asylum Program for Refugee

A refugee is considered by Casey (2020) to be a person that has been displaced and forced to move from their home and nation and then decides to cross borders to seek safety and shelter in a new nation. Various countries, such as Turkey, Finland, Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, among others, offer asylum to different categories of refugees to ensure they can start a new life or live a better one until they resettle.¹ Resettlement is supposed to serve as a protection strategy, but it is never a linear settling down or getting a permanent residence settlement; resettlement that does not shield one from facing relocation challenges, especially when declaring oneself as a refugee (Hyndman and Giles 2017). As Amnesty International (2022) stated, the global number of refugees as of 2021 is about 30 million, more than two-thirds of the world's refugees came from Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar. Syria has been the leading “country of origin for refugees since 2014, and at the end of 2019, there were 6.6 million Syrian refugees hosted by 126 countries worldwide” (Amnesty International, 2022). Further more, Amnesty International (2022) stated that “In 2019, only 0.5% of the world’s refugees were resettled. Over the past decade, just over 1 million refugees were resettled, compared to 3.9

¹ <https://www.immigration-residency.com/asylum-best-countries/>

million refugees who returned to their country.” More than 80% of the refugees are women and children (UNHCR, 2020).

The number of global refugees is alarming and is projected to grow with the present situation in various parts of the world, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine (Leon *et al.*, 2022).

In addition, the unrest in parts of the middle – east, Saheel region, and Sahara Region of Africa have the potential to force a great magnitude of people to flee and leave their homes and seek asylum in Poland, Austria and other countries offering refuge (Hunter, Arthur & Morphy, 2019).

The War in Syria seems to have abetted, at least for now. However, the war between Russia and Ukraine is still very much on. If it continues for much longer, it may worsen the refugee crisis significantly, as more people with no choice but to flee for their safety and Survival (Leon *et al.*, 2022). Among those running are mothers who single-handedly raise children alone but will be refugee single mothers because they seek asylum in other countries to protect themselves and their children.

Most refugee single mothers think that by seeking asylum in a country, they will receive physical protection and an improvement in their socioeconomic situation. As a result, the percentage of female refugees to all refugees varies substantially, depending on factors including age, geography, and type of refugee situation. For instance, the proportion of female refugees tends to be about 50% in nations with significant refugee populations, given the pandemic's disproportionately devastating consequences on the world's most vulnerable, single-mother refugees who were resettled encountered different effects from those of the pandemic (Watson *et al.*, 2020).

The Government of Canada has two kinds of refugee platforms (see table 2.1). This study focused on the in-Canada Asylum Program (ICAP). The in-Canada Asylum Program (ICAP) is for people already in Canada who fear being persecuted, tortured, receiving heavy punishment, or sometimes

may be put to death if they are back in their country of origin (IRCC, 2021). Some people in this category came into Canada through the illegal entry, some as students or visitors, tourists or temporary work visas, spousal visas, etc. They realized they could not go back to their country for safety reasons. These categories of people are all called refugee claimants at the beginning of their stating their claim. Then, they go through refugee board hearings, and ICAP confirms refugee status to claimants in Canada who have a well-founded fear of returning to their country. Others whose claims were rejected by the refugee board go through the appeal process, and if not still accepted, they go further to apply for humanitarian aid (Wilkinson, Lori and Joseph Grace. 2017). Although those who seek protection (primarily single mothers) in Canada do so for humanitarian reasons, the success of their integration depends heavily on the labour market results. Therefore, open work permits are given to refugees by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada so they can sustain themselves while waiting for a decision on their application (Lu, Frenette and Gure, 2020). In addition, it may lessen their reliance on social assistance programs run by the provinces and territories.

The second aspect of the Government of Canada platform is the Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program (RHRP). The RHRP is for people seeking asylum outside Canada (Wilkinson, Lori and Joseph Grace. 2017). It is divided into categories.

- i. Government-Assisted Refugees (G.A.R.s): The Government-Assisted Refugees (G.A.R.) program focuses on refugees referred to the Government of Canada by the UNHCR and other partners with such agreements with the Government of Canada. To be qualified to receive such benefits, such refugees must be registered with UNHCR, the referring agencies or the state authorities in the country where they found asylum to be considered

for referral. The refugees that fall into this category have all the processes of coming to Canada fully sponsored by the Government of Canada (Kaida *et al.*, 2019).

- ii. Privately Sponsored Refugees (P.S.R.s): The private sector or not-for-profit organizations sponsor these refugees coming to Canada. The phrase "a privately sponsored refugee" has been used to describe people who have been granted asylum in Canada but are not officially recognized as refugees (Hyndman *et al.*, 2017). These individuals are eligible to come and reside in Canada, though they are not formally recognized as refugees because they cannot be denied entry to Canada (Hyndman *et al.*, 2017).
- iii. Shared Sponsorship Programs (SSP): These are a group of refugees whose whole process of coming to Canada is sponsored by both Government of Canada and private sectors or not-for-profit organizations (Dhital, 2015). For a long time, "shared sponsorship" has been applied to refugee agencies and refugee sponsorship programs. However, many organizations use the term "shared sponsorship" today. Such organizations are involved in the humanitarian and refugee parts of their work. Shared sponsorship programs come into being when the agency recognizes its obligation to those it assists and the refugees it helps (Nakhaie, 2018). Shared sponsorship is a way through which the organization can express its commitment to the people it assists.

Table 1: Canadian Asylum Program for Refugee

S.N.	Type of Asylum Program	Current Resident	Categories	Reasons for each category
1	In-Canada Asylum	Canada	refugee claimants, humanitarian aid	

2	Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program (RHRP)	outside Canada	Government Assisted Refugees	fully sponsored by the Government of Canada
			Privately Sponsored Refugees (P.S.R.s),	fully sponsored by the private sector or not-for-profit organizations.
			Shared Sponsorship Programs	both the Government of Canada and private sectors or non-for-profit organizations

The 1951 Convention integrates former international instruments associated with refugees and gives codification at the international level for the rights of refugees (UNHCR, 2020). Being a refugee is often seen as a curse, while regular migration is seen as a blessing. Because not everyone has the privilege to enjoy the free flow of mobility, those who migrate without any form of force or war are seen as being blessed.

Migrants are defined as individuals who willingly leave their country of origin to find a better life in another nation apart from their original country of origin. Before they leave their nation, migrants may inquire about the country they intend to migrate to.² Some migrants study the

² <https://www.iom.int/who-migrant-0>

preferred language, culture, and other aspects of life in the country they intend to migrate to settle down once they get to the new country. Migrants plan their travel, take their movable properties with them, and say goodbye to relevant people in their lives. After several months or years, based on their respective decision, they could decide to return home at any time if the circumstances are not favourable. However, in the case of migrant women, some bear extra burdens in the process of immigration to support family members adjusting to a new way of living and often protect and uphold family values, culture, and beliefs (WHO, 2017).

Most people assume that refugees are people who have been compelled to flee their country because of risk, threat, danger, or severe persecution. Despite the common misconception that migrants are migrating for a better life and refugees are escaping danger, the truth is more nuanced than that. People may be classified as migrants at one point in their migration journey and as refugees at another. Migration journeys might last years, sometimes even decades, from the commencement of that journey to a relatively established condition. Even if they are not in immediate danger, some people can obtain refugee status because they have the means to do so. While others who are in immediate danger but cannot get legal assistance or financial resources may still be classified as migrants even though their reasons for leaving threaten their lives (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018).

Refugee usually flees, leaving behind their homes, valuable possessions, business, family members and friends. At times they are left with no choice but to run at concise notice (Casey, 2020), just like the case of some Ukrainian citizens during the Russian invasion with no sign of warning. Several refugees have experienced extreme trauma or been tortured, experienced domestic abuse, or other forms of violence (Boutin *et al.*, 2021). Many refugees take risks by seeking safety and protection in other lands and often cannot return home due to threats to their very lives. According

to Nicholson and Kumin (2017, p. 7), "more than 80% of those fleeing their countries as refugees find protection in neighbouring ones, whose people and governments are often struggling to manage the impact of a nearby conflict and to address their development challenges." Unless the circumstances surrounding their need to flee their country are reversed, they cannot return to their country of origin.

Furthermore, the refugee situation within the world is seen as problematic based on its complex situation in terms of providing camps for the refugees and basic amenities like relief materials and security. Refugees are a subcategory of immigrants and have encountered abnormal battery and stress on their health before arriving in Canada (Beiser, 2005). Refugees are similar to migrants, having a lower death rate than native Canadians. However, they do not have the vigorous health advantages of immigrants and are particularly vulnerable to infections and diseases (Beiser, 2005). Increased pressure on refugees and immigrants has been recognized (Nardon *et al.*, 2021). The Labour Force Survey data indicates that employment rates have declined for recent and settled refugees more than for native-born Canadians (Nakhaie, 2018).

Canada prides itself as a caring and generous nation and has demonstrated its interest in welcoming and catering to refugee needs. Also, some of Canada's national policies, decisions, and actions prove that Canada is a caring nation. But unfortunately, migrants and refugees are often subjected to economic exploitation of various degrees, including unemployment and under-employment of professionals who feel humiliated (Jackson and Bauder, 2013). Jackson and Bauder (2013) also explained how some professionals who migrate to Canada end up on social assistance from the Government despite being professionals in their country of origin.

Refugees and migrants are sometimes admitted into Canada through the same part, though typically under different circumstances. However, both migrants and refugees experience various limitations and hindrances upon entry. The limiting conditions placed on their part constrain their drive for economic self-reliance and a sense of fulfilment. They often depend on social assistance, which disillusioned them (Nakhaie, 2018). Even skilled migrants are often deskilled and earn less than high educational attainment (Jackson and Bauder, 2013). Refugees are even worse off, as their previous employment experiences from their country of origin are underscored due to the insecurity of their status and the unease of impermanence (Jackson and Bauder, 2013).

Migrants and refugees, in general, are disadvantaged in the country they have immigrated to, as already highlighted. Still, refugee single mothers are even more disadvantaged, as they are not only part of underprivileged refugees but also single mothers. This condition comes with its own additional and peculiar challenges. Nevertheless, it is fascinating to discover that migrants and refugees have common things in their lives. Migrants and refugees want to live in a new country with a better life where they have all they ever desired compared to the previous nation they were occupying before moving.

In the 1980s, the Canadian Government wondered if how it checked on emigrants was enough. Even though the early withdrawal of the individual confirmation phase gave applicants a chance to be skeptical, the system still put the public Government's interests ahead of the inquirers. Ratushny Report (1984) ³ showed that Canada's current individual confirmation system had weaknesses, inconsistencies, and weak spots. Based on the results, it seems like the process of handling claims from outsiders needs more time and money (Malarek, 2008). However, the

³ <https://www.worldcat.org/title/applesauce/oclc/840438409?page=citation>

Government criticized Canada's recent refugee policy, so it created an Advisory Committee to investigate the situation (Malarek, 2008).⁴The Committee concluded that Canada is not observing the Refugee Convention and that a small number of refugees are being relocated to places where those who are not refugees are not welcome.

In a short time, another court decision made the results of Robertson and Ratushny hard to understand. In *Singh v. Minister of Employment and Immigration* in 1985, the Supreme Court of Canada said that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms gave uprooted Canadian lawyers a lot of weight. The decision was made because of petitions from seven people (six Sikhs with Indian citizenship and one Guyanese with Indian roots) who registered their exile status when they arrived in Canada. Since all seven victims had the same illness, they were looked at in the same case. Their requests for coverage were denied, and the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) didn't give them another chance to talk to them. Harbhajan Singh's group said the plan was illegal because it went against Section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which states that "life, opportunity, and security of the person are not to be denied combined with the principles of essential worth." A majority of the Supreme Court rules in favour of the appellants, saying that the use of "essential value" makes it more likely that an applicant who has been shunned will still be there at an oral hearing to confirm evacuation (Kelley, 2015)

In the same year, the Canadian Government asked for another look at how its untouchable confirmations are put together. *Refugee Determination in Canada*, a paper by Rabbi Gunther Plaut, came out 13 days after the achievement court decision (Plaut Report, 1985). The research gives specific suggestions for how to make the individual confirmation system fairer and more stable.

⁴ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/canadas-immigration-policy-focus-human-capital>

Some of these ideas were to have oral hearings, a free and robust authority to look into claims, a complete appeals process, and local choices nationwide. Because of the three light evaluations and the Singh decision, it became tough for government experts to figure out how to handle sensitive procedures for inland exile claims (Dossan, 2021). This turned off individual promoters. Due to the Supreme Court's decision, over 63,000 uprooted individual applicants are waiting for a full oral hearing. The Canadian Government did an administrative review and decided to let pariah inquirers who came to Canada before May 21, 1986, stay for a while. If they were already working or thought they would soon find work, they could remain in Canada and become good tenants (Shawna, 2004)

Moreover, Canada is a country of immigrants and travellers. The main issue in Canadian immigration policy is that of refugees. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the rights of refugees but also gives the Government the right to take in people who have no right to be there. Its views on refugee policies weaved together historical and contemporary perspectives and their related theories. It provided an account of the history and motives of Canada's refugee policies since the 1960s (B.C. Stats, 2009). Precisely, Canada's role in refugee policy has changed from the 1950s to the late 1990s, with the aim of keeping Canada safe. At the same time, Canada has become more 'green,' or willing to settle claims for refugees, and is also increasing its refugee intake. In 2007, they accepted the first refugee from Iran. The numbers are still small, but the seriousness of the situation has grown.

Front-line staff at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in Vancouver say that the number of clients who are single mothers and don't have legal status in Canada has increased

recently.⁵ Because these front-line workers were worried about these clients, they asked advocates informally if they thought the number of clients was going up to see if they were right (B.C. Stats, 2009). The results (over 60 reports of single mothers living in British Columbia) led the YWCA Vancouver to do more research, leading to the research project on Single Mothers without Legal Status in Canada (Lu, Frenette, & Gure, 2020).

Women who don't have legal status have to deal with two systems that don't work well together: immigration and family law. As a result of trying to meet the requirements of both systems, these mothers often find themselves in the embarrassing and untenable situation of being unable to take their children out of Canada. At the same time, their applications for permanent residence are being processed, which can take up to two years (Hojabri, 2006) (from 2006 to date, is the situation still the same). Canadians take fundamental rights, benefits, and services for granted. Two years without them is a long time. In addition, due to not having a legal way to stay in the country and being unable to speak the language, mothers without status are alone, dependent, and open to abuse. In reality, all of the low-status women who were abused and their abusers used the fact that they were low-status to keep them in line.

Even though they were vulnerable, refugee mothers who didn't have legal status chose to leave abusive relationships. Because they didn't have legal status, they were always in danger and worried their children would be taken by their abusive ex-partners or sent back to their home country without them (Jaffe, 2003). Still, they didn't have enough homes, money, health care, or

⁵ <https://ywcavan.org/>

educational opportunities for themselves or their children. In addition, Canada's Citizenship and Immigration laws say that women without status can not work (CEIC, 2019).

During this waiting time, these women can't take care of themselves or their children because they are not allowed to work and don't qualify for financial help. They must stay with their violent husbands to get money and other benefits from the Government. As a result, women without status may have to rely on the kindness and generosity of others for housing, food, and clothes, or they may turn to illegal jobs like "survival sex" to make money. Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act recently added the phrase "best interests of the children" (CEIC, 2019). This is a welcome and possibly helpful change to the law for women without status, but how it is used in immigration cases is unfair and very different from how it is used in family law cases (Khosravi, 2010). It is the most crucial problem for mothers with low status. A family law judge may order a mother without status to share custody of her Canadian-born children with her abusive ex-partner (Ministry of Children and Family Development, 2004). Alternatively, the judge may decide that the mother can't take care of her children because she can't work or find stable housing and lives in constant fear of being deported without her children.

2.3 Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the job prospects for refugee single mothers

The Covid-19 pandemic is infectious, just like every other disease categorized as a pandemic, which led to numerous global economic disruptions and employment uncertainties worldwide. It left a devastating mark on all countries worldwide, including Canada. According to the Howe Institute Business Cycle Council, Canada's recession was in the first quarter of 2020. (Edmonds & Flahault, 2021). This faltering of the economy will have a direct long- and short-term effect on persons living in Canada, including refugees, as they are one of the most vulnerable groups. In

addition, information from the Canada Conference Committee research states many people are unemployed, causing the unemployment rate in Canada to soar due to the 50% drop in job deficits in March 2020 that continued through April 2020 (Hindle, 2020).

The job deficit caused an economic downturn for refugees in Canada (CEIC, 2019). It is not a coincidence that the American economy also impacted refugees in the U.S.A. to the extent that an additional 1% of the time being out of work in the United States, the refugees would have a deduction of 2.99% of their salary (Edmonds & Flahault, 2021). It was not just a case for the refugees in the U.S.A as other countries such as Canada experienced some form of hardship or the other ranging from social exclusion and exploitation.

Refugee women cannot take up jobs that can be on a part-time or full-time basis, in contrast to other migrant women, particularly those with permanent residency status (Wilkinson and Garcea, 2017). However, it is unsurprising that male refugees do better than female refugees regarding jobs (Kaida *et al.*, 2019). Possibly this is because, on average, male refugees tend to have some schooling or a skill that puts them at a better advantage than female refugees (Salikutluk & Menke, 2021). It indicates that refugee women are most likely to suffer the consequences due to Covid-19 and the results of the economic downfall since their unemployment rates are higher than men.

In the case reported in January 2020, the borders, airports, public businesses and schools had to be shut down, and this is where the real impact occurred and was felt nationwide. Over 3 million people were laid off during the pandemic, which caused a historical rise in unemployment in April 2020. According to May 2020 C.B.C. News, Statistics Canada's Labour Force disclosed the information visible in the community considering the number of people who could not go to work. (C.B.C. News, 2020.) Developing research has shown a remarkable increase in gender hardship imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic in different national contexts. Refugee women have

experienced gender inequalities more at jobs and in society during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is evident that inequalities will continue even at the end of the Covid-19 pandemic (Nardon *et al.*, 2021). The downturn and recovery from the Covid-19 lockdowns have significant issues related to gender work equality, including unemployment dominated by women and increasing household care for children and the elderly. The care provided is essential in creating or sustaining a healthy and productive family, expanding to the community and nation. Still, it has always been overlooked for policy improvements and changes (Larios, L. 2019).

Generally, the pandemic has intensified economic barriers for women, such as career opportunities, advancements, and salaries. In addition, the closing of schools caused a lack of childcare assistance from school officials, resulting in unreasonable pressure placed on women and disproportionate mental health due to chores and childcare services. (Nardon *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, Nardon *et al.* (2021) also explained that "The Labour Force Survey data indicates that employment rates have declined more for recent and settled refugees than native-born Canadians." Apart from the difficulties faced during the pandemic, there is also an influence on the processing of visa and permit applications and the loss of job opportunities leading to financial implications which affect migrants as a whole (Boutilier, 2020). As a result, new refugees, and new migrant women, are generally more vulnerable; they are marginalized and face more gender inequality challenges (Cooke, 2007; Larios, L. 2019; Al-Ali, 2020; Nardon *et al.*, 2021).

Moreover, in collaboration with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the Refugee Single Mother in Jobs (RSIMJ) programme in (year) launched a unique, innovative approach to engaging refugee single mothers (Boutilier, 2020). The programme works directly with refugee single mothers and their employers to create a new role for them in the Canadian labour market and, in turn, develop the skills of their former homelands that are needed in the Canadian labour market.

For instance, the Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, announced that the Federal Government is considering giving families of children who have fled from their homes in a refugee camp in Quebec, Canada, a \$1,200 payment for each child (Parliament of Canada (2016).

Since the pandemic and the after-effects, the most asked questions are who has been the most affected and where intervention strategies should be directed. It has revealed the long and inordinate health inequities faced by migrant communities in many areas. Numerous immigrants from various backgrounds fall under distinct categories in Canada (Tuyisenge & Goldenberg, 2021). How are refugee single mothers subjected to these diverse categories? According to Hudon's (2015) report, "the population of the female migrant, in general, has increased significantly over the last century, and as of 2011, the percentage of female migrants was 52.3%." (p. 3).

Temporary immigrants and refugees tend to have less considerable coverage provided by social security systems, counting health; this is the reality for migrants and mothers (Larios, 2019). It is even more challenging for some refugee mothers due to their lack of language proficiency. They do not understand what the doctor advises about their health or prescription due to a lack of understanding of the Canadian health system and the language barrier. Although language classes and programs are available where refugee single mothers could meet newcomers like them, socialization and information sharing could happen (Larios, 2019). Even with such programs, it has never been easy for these women to settle fully. Some cannot communicate with others as they may be from different countries, meaning they may speak different languages. In many countries, access to Covid-19 information is provided in several languages, and healthcare and safety tips are also accessible (OECD, 2020), but the most vulnerable ones are still lagging.

However, the most vulnerable groups cannot preview key details and often depend on a minor support system for Covid-19 do's and don'ts. It also means that refugee single mothers are exposed to harsher effects on their children's physical and mental health. As Dalexis and Cenat (2020) state, "Refugees have had specific health and wellness problems such as depression, somatic disorders, and post-traumatic stress involving suicidal thoughts and behaviours." (p.2).

2.4 Impact of Discrimination and Exploitation on Single Refugee Mothers' Financial Stability in Canada

Understanding the concept of discrimination and exploitation among refugee single mothers in Canada requires understanding these individuals' complex social and economic circumstances (Francis, 2009). Discrimination is characterized as an interpersonal activity that relates to the unfair treatment of others based on perceived social differences (Fish & Syed, 2019). Exploitation is a complex, multifaceted concept that refers to the unequal power and authority that exists between two or more parties in a relationship. In its most basic form, exploitation occurs when one person takes advantage of the other, which can be expressed in various behaviours and circumstances (Francis, 2009).

In Canada, single refugee mothers face multiple financial challenges. Some policies, like the Canada child benefit, have undoubtedly contributed to the low rates of integration of refugees into the community and the high rates of human rights abuses that affect refugee single mothers and their children (Canada Revenue Agency [C.R.A.], 2022). For example, while refugee single mothers are claimants, they cannot access Canadian child benefits because they are not permanent residents or protected persons. "The Canada child benefit is a monthly payment given to families that qualify for it according to each's family income, which can help with the cost of raising children under 18 years of age" (C.R.A., 2022). All other kinds of single mothers could apply for

this benefit, even those on a temporary permit, but refugee single mothers can not, which is an act of discrimination refugee single mothers face in Canada (C.R.A., 2022).

According to Crawley & Skleparis (2018), refugees are subjected to hardships, including lack of security, joblessness, isolation, and poverty. Their struggle could also be a reflection of their past reflection due to the traumas or fleeing war zones in their home country. Refugee single mothers need to find ways to maintain a stable home and family because of the precarious nature of their situation. However, the challenges they encounter can also reflect their past. They often face isolation and poverty. Some refugee single mothers live in temporary shelters that are unsafe for them because they do not have the resources to provide their children with a safe home, and inadequate economic conditions make it virtually impossible to move to safer or more conducive environments, which are usually more expensive. Some get help from social workers who help secure a better living environment at times, while others do not.

Refugee single women face many challenges, especially working mothers with limited resources (Aubé *et al.*, 2019). Most single parents depend on their relatives to help assist with childcare, especially when they are not in a position to meet their child's needs (Aubé *et al.*, 2019). Refugee single mothers lack the social support in a two-parent family (Aubé *et al.*, 2019). Not only do they lack the help of a spouse or partner, but they do not have access to any extended family members who could provide them with physical or emotional support or respite. However, even as refugee single mothers strive to get sustainable employment and provide for their families, they endure particular challenges like discrimination and exploitation (Aubé *et al.*, 2019).

According to Aubé *et al.* (2019), a lack of suitable quality employment can contribute to inadequate financial resources for raising and caring for their children." It is one of the reasons single mothers are sometimes trapped in the same house as their children. As a result of not getting

suitable employment, they can not pay for childcare services to help watch their children while they are at work. For this reason, refugee single mothers have to stay home with their children all day which some are not used to anymore because they had always had help from family and friends before getting to Canada, so they feel trapped with their children.

(Long, 2011: 22), stated that “the lack of permanent resident status limits their access to local labour markets and prevents the displaced from setting up businesses or accessing education or health services.” In Canada, Refugee single mothers, just like the other refugees, can not access higher education or any form of education unless the Government sanctions it. The programs they can access only funnel refugees into low-paying employment such as childcare services, companion sitting positions, factory workers, taxi drivers or Personal Support Worker positions (PSW) (Long, 2011).

In many countries, asylum seekers are denied access to health services and social benefits; some are separated from their families. Refugee single mothers are often the primary caregivers of their children. In addition, parents may struggle to find time for their children's schooling (Grant & Guerin, 2019). While Canada offers health services and social benefits, many refugees have difficulty obtaining services due to language barriers, a lack of understanding of the Canadian health system, and doctors not wanting to be registered as health providers for refugees (Larios, 2019). The difficulty in finding professionals who understand the physical and mental toll placed on refugee single mothers and refugees' personal or cultural beliefs surrounding or accessing the mental health system means they are mentally unstable and undesirable (Larios, 2019).

According to United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR, 2020), "by the end of 2020, about 82.4 million people worldwide have been forced to flee their homes due to violence

and persecution".⁶ In addition, war and other human catastrophes constantly upset public peace within and between many nations across the globe. According to the United Nations, individuals under 18 make up 42% of all displaced individuals worldwide (UNHCR, 2020). Furthermore, many of these individuals under 18 belong to refugee single mother-led households (UNHCR, 2020).

Many refugees single mothers are overwhelmed by their role to economically support and be the head of their households once they enter a new country that is culturally different from their home country. Refugee single mothers entering Canada face barriers such as adapting to new cultural norms or language barriers. In addition, some refugee single mothers have come from countries where they typically remained at home raising children and lack the skills and knowledge to enter the workforce (Aubé *et al.*, 2019).

Single refugee mothers in Canada are some of Canada's most vulnerable and marginalized individuals, with limited access to social safety nets. Additionally, single mothers who are undocumented and separated from their children are a significant population in Canada (Smith *et al.*, 2021). Some refugee mothers had to flee their home country, leaving their children behind. Other refugee mothers have had their children removed from custody due to delays in picking up their children from daycare or after-school programs due to their work schedules. Single refugee mothers of colour are especially vulnerable to being reported to C.A.S. or being investigated by C.A.S. Compared to white children, black children in Ontario are 40% more likely to be investigated by the Children's Aid Society (Aubé *et al.*, 2019).

⁶ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/06/unhcr-how-many-refugees/>

According to Borshuk and Eljdupovic (2019), single mothers live in the most impoverished areas of Canada. To survive, they must find a way to find a job or become a residential carers. A single mother's contributions to society can tremendously impact her child's life. In Canada, the plight of single mothers is a cause of great concern. Damaske, Bratter and Frech (2018) consider the political economy of single mothers and how the status of mothers living in poverty or with minimal resources affects their lives. The issue of inequality, the different ways different women are used, and the extent of inequality. The single refugee mother is not a model the Canadian Government wants to promote for social change. The Canadian government model for a family is based on the belief that families are made up of a single father (one parent) and a single mother (two parents). It is a patriarchal model that is not anticipated to change.

Additionally, Canadians are experiencing a phenomenon known as 'the refugee crisis.'⁷ It is the term used to describe the number of refugees coming to Canada under the guise of fleeing war or persecution. The situation has contributed to a rising number of single mothers not entitled to refugee status, causing many to leave their homes and family members to go to Canada. Consequently, it has led to several suicides, with a suicide rate of 8.9 percent (Khosravi, 2010). The Refugee Single Mother is a subject of great political significance in the Canadian political economy. The single refugee mother is an in-demand worker willing to take on the world for work, which is why the Refugee Single Mother has become an important topic of debate in the Canadian political economy (Wanigaratne *et al.*, 2018).

According to Smith *et al.* (2021), discrimination in the life of single refugee mothers is almost universal, even in high-income countries. This unequal treatment affects women's ability to access

⁷ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ec96eaf06e9a46879a8d7f03df55e311>

services and contribute to society. Singh (2007), in his paper, argues that there is a link between discrimination and the formation of mixed-class families. The paper examines the lives of refugee single mothers in the refugee camp in Jordan and the relations between the mothers and their child's lives. It also examines how the mother and child are related within the social hierarchy. It analyses how these prejudices are maintained and reinforced. The article also looked at relations between the self and society in the life of a single refugee mother. The research involves a series of focus groups with single refugee mothers currently living in Jordan. The study was made using the qualitative methods of content analysis. The research findings show that single refugee mothers do not fit into their families' existing social class structures, resulting from their experiences of discrimination and social marginalization.

Similarly, Ziersch, Due & Walsh's (2020) research reveals that some asylum seekers are not doing well regarding employment. This is particularly true for single refugee mothers. Most refugee single mothers look for survival jobs, worth noting at the end of the day after taking out the amount they use to pay for childcare and other expenses. The concept that has significantly impacted their condition is the fact that the cases of single refugee mothers are rarely addressed in the literature. Unfortunately, none of the books I've read to this point has given us a clear picture of the circumstances and realities of this particular case.'

Canada has a history of adapting its migration and refugee system to the needs of its large dynamic populations (Griffith, 2019). However, in recent years, the country has faced rising discrimination against refugees, especially single women. In addition, the main concern of many people in Canada is that their children will fall victim to discrimination in Canadian public schools, which leads to social ostracism and mental illness. However, there also appears to be a positive side as well (Tull *et al.*, 2020).

This study is based on refugee single mothers in Canada and their struggles. Many single women are forced into the immigration system by their families when they are young and are forced to take on the role of soup kitchens and shelters, and many of these women are continually harassed and pushed out of their homes, and their lives often become a nightmare because of it. Single women are also forced to bear the brunt of sexual harassment and violence, often committed by men, to fight for their livelihood.

2.5 Summary and Gap in Literature

The literature review was conducted on the concepts understudy to provide detailed background for the study considering the issues of Covid-19 and the discussion of the ordeals of refugee single mothers. In addition, the review looked into the different opinions and findings of past studies to aid in identifying gaps in the literature related to this study. Finally, the review was explicitly centred on closely related ideas both locally and internationally to have provided an empirical background for the study.

The need for immediate consideration of the plight of refugee single mothers has prompted discussions in Canada and worldwide. After a detailed examination, the literature review identified gaps that formed the direction and bases for this study. The most significant issue is that most of the articles that have an opinion on the subject matter are mere opinions of the writers with no direct interaction with the refugee single mothers to get firsthand information about their experiences. This study, therefore, provides an empirical argument on the subject. In addition, few studies closely related to the topic are mostly scoped outside Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, thereby creating a geographical gap that this study intends to remedy.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

This section highlights the concepts and theoretical framework adopted for this study. In looking at the study's objectives, the major concepts to be considered are the pandemic with reference to Covid-19 and refugee single mothers with reference to employment opportunities and exploitations. Furthermore, since the study focused on the experiences of refugee single mothers during the Covid-19 pandemic, the study adopted the social exclusion theory to elaborate on the concepts and as a framework for the study.

3.2 The Social Exclusion Theory

The social exclusion theory has been described as one of the most significant theoretical developments of the late 20th and early 21st centuries (Bowen *et al.*, 2000; Wessels & Miedema, 2021). Exclusion theory can also be referred to as power and domination theory. The social exclusion hypothesis assumes that specific individuals or groups in a given community may become socially excluded from normal society due to their disadvantageous circumstances. Silver (2007) proposed the social exclusion theory and stated that the dynamic process of being excluded is entirely or partly from any social, economic, political, or cultural structures that control a person's social integration in society. Social exclusion can be viewed as a substitute for or perhaps a synonym for marginalization in sociological terms. Béland (2007) asserts that older theorists frequently conceptualized it as a procedure wherein a state administratively excludes a group.

Exclusion is undoubtedly not a recent phenomenon and cannot be solely attributed to the acceleration of modernization. The notion of exclusion is characterized as the inability to fully

participate in economic, political, social, and cultural facets of normal civilization. Therefore, exclusion implies a feeling of loss or rejection (Wessels & Miedema, 2021). Exclusion has several dimensions, none of which typically intersect. In terms of the economy, exclusion refers to the difficulty of having employment that pays well enough to cover essential expenses. In terms of politics, exclusion denotes an inability to gain a connection to sources of power and an impossibility of engaging in decision-making mechanisms beginning at the household level actively. Finally, exclusion equates to denigration in the eyes of oneself and others, the loss of respectability and dignity in a social context. Disparities between these three dimensions offer the opportunity for measures that could promote inclusion (Béland, 2007). For example, this exclusion could be based on a person's colour, age, gender, or social class. For example, black women frequently experience exclusion due to their gender (Miles & Peters, 2020).

In Elaborating on these theoretical assumptions, this study structured a conceptual model to test the experience of refugee single mothers empirically. With this background, this study focused on one of the two traditional notions of social exclusion theory, economic-structural exclusion, to enhance the theoretical framework to capture the study's objective. The economic-structural exclusion comprises two dimensions (Silver, 2007) which are thus;

- Material deprivation: Deficiencies concerning access to basic needs and material goods; lifestyle deprivation; problematic debts; payment arrears; job discrimination; housing costs etc.
- Social rights deprivation: Inadequate access to government and semi-government provisions, legal aid, social services, debt assistance, employment agencies, social security, and certain commercial services (such as banking and insurance); insufficient safety.

Consequently, the identified sub-theoretical dimensions of social exclusion were operationalized in terms of interview questions. For example, the thought of material Another adopted indicator for material deprivation was the level of possibility of obtaining financial support from a bank. On the other hand, social rights deprivation focused on access to education, health care, social security and safety (Tsai, Barr & Welch, 2017).

The model is conceptualized thus;

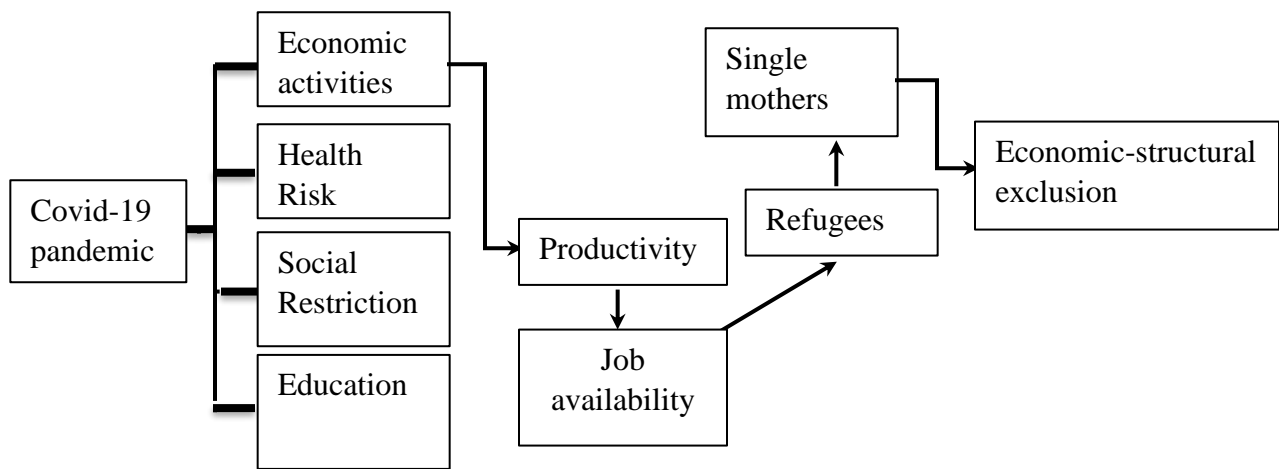


Figure 1 Conceptual Map

Source: Author's conceptualization

From the framework, the primary concept of interest is a disruption in economic activities due to Covid-19, its impact on productivity and job availability and the experiences of refugee single mothers considering the notion of social exclusion theory.

3.3 The context of the Covid-19 pandemic

Leduc and Zheng (2020) opined that a pandemic is an outbreak of infectious diseases that spread over country boundaries with a high prevalence rate, mainly affecting a substantial proportion of the world's population. Pandemics ascend from uncontained epidemics that extend from the originated country to other countries. Most of the time, pandemics occur in waves with different

phases, characterized by the Covid-19 pandemic. Like every other infectious disease categorized as a pandemic, the Covid-19 pandemic led to numerous global economic disruptions and employment uncertainties. Canada has its share of the imbalances in economic activities as the Canadian government fought to slow the spread of the virus; it adopted strict social distancing measures and shelter-in-place orders like other parts of the world. By shutting down non-essential businesses and forcing workers to stay home, these necessary public health policy measures contributed to further depressing economic activity. Though as Edmonds & Flahault (2021) stipulated and as captured in the framework, the effect of the pandemic spread through the disruption of economic activities, health risks, social restriction, closure of campus activities etc. However, this study focused mainly on the pandemic's effect on economic activities that limited production and job availability for both indigenes and immigrants. It was noted that the Canadian government initiated a series of relief policies to help curtail the economic and health effect of the pandemic (Edmonds & Flahault, 2021). It is imperative then to investigate the experiences of refugee single mothers during the Covid-19 period through a one-on-one interview (in-person) and establish if they experienced any form of social exclusion.

3.4 The Concept of Refugees Single mothers

As stated in the literature review section, One of Canada's most recent and pressing issues is the influx of refugees, many of whom are single mothers. Refugees are often forced to leave their homes and countries because of political unrest and conflict and often have to leave their families behind. Many end up in Canada, a country with a long tradition of being a haven for people fleeing political turmoil and violence. Casey (2020) opined that refugees have been displaced and forced to move from their home and nation to another country to seek safety and shelter in a new nation. Refugee women are more exposed as a result of the traumatic experiences of their families,

particularly those that occurred before they arrived in their country of asylum. (Zannettino *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, refugee single mothers are even more disadvantaged, as not only are they part of the underprivileged refugees, but they are also single mothers. This condition comes with its own additional and peculiar challenges.

Amadala (2012) reported that refugee single mothers face many challenges and barriers to accessing employment and maintaining their standard of living in Canada. For example, many single mothers cannot find work due to language barriers, geographic isolation, and limited job opportunities. In addition, single mothers often face high barriers to employment, such as being ineligible for Employment Insurance when their spouse is also employed. This lack of employment opportunities and access to employment support has severe implications for refugee single mothers' ability to support their families and access social support.

The refugee single-mother population in Canada is one of the most diverse populations in the country (Casey, 2020). Single mothers who are refugees have come from all over the world, bringing their cultural values, traditions, and ways of raising their children. However, when the parents first arrive in Canada, they often find themselves in a foreign country where they do not speak the language, have little to no family or community support, and are often confused about how they will provide for their families. Despite this, single mothers as refugees have demonstrated remarkable resilience and determination in building a better future for their families. Guruge *et al.* (2017) argued, "Notably, refugee single mothers are overrepresented among the groups of women who have experienced domestic or sexual violence in Canada, despite representing a small proportion of the population. One in eight women in Canada have been a victim of domestic or sexual violence, but the rates are much higher for refugee single mothers." (Guruge *et al.* 2017). What causes this overrepresentation, and what can be done to reduce it? This

study explores the concept of exclusion among single mothers as a starting point for answering these questions. It begins by providing a brief overview of the literature on single mothers and the literature on refugee single mothers in Canada before examining the concept of exclusion and its relevance to the study of single mothers.

3.5 The Concept of exploitation and refugee single mothers

The vulnerability of refugee single mother and their children to various forms of exploitation has persistently been identified as a significant and serious protection issue.⁸ In a simple understanding of exploitation, it involves a relationship between or more parties whereby one among the parties uses power and superiority to take advantage of the other parties and make a gain at the expense of the others (Bond & Kwadrans, 2019). Bericat (2018) argued that discrimination is an act of exploitation that allows powerful social groups to take advantage of others by ranking their status and obtaining benefits, resources, and other advantages at their expense.

Therefore the advantage gains the oppressor comes at the cost of the single mothers. This can further be highlighted by the story of victoria and captured in the study of Ferris (2007), which shared a familiar connection with several exploitation concepts. An abstract of the narrative stated how victoria and her brother were hired to paint houses and were kicked out without pay. This story portrays the experiences most refugee single mothers are subjected to in such a dehumanizing and precarious manner.

The issue of exploitation as related to the experiences of single mothers was also captured in the study of Nardon *et al.* (2021), which opine that single mothers are more vulnerable and marginalized, thereby facing all sorts of exploitation as they try to provide for themselves and their

⁸ <https://www.unhcr.org/3bb81aea4.pdf>

children. The various form of exploitation experienced by single mothers subjects them to economic hardship, lack of security, joblessness, isolation, and poverty (UNHCR, 2017).

3.6 The Concept of Exclusion and Experience of Refugee Single Mothers

Despite the existence of human rights legislation on immigrants, many nations, including Canada, face several difficulties because of their lack of legal standing. Social exclusion can be used to explain how refugee populations are marginalized at the state and community levels in the case of refugee populations. The social exclusion theory was employed in this study to examine how single refugee mothers are marginalized because of their gender and status as refugees. According to Sjoberg (2010), many of the most significant public realms of contemporary social, political, and economic life have long excluded women.

Social exclusion theory, as related to refugee single mothers in Canada, explains the phenomenon whereby, over long periods, some refugee single mothers have been exempted from social protection systems. In addition, they face other social deprivations, such as limited livelihood opportunities and inadequate access to health services and education (Kubota, Raymond, Caine, & Clandinin, 2022). The theory argues that anomie sets in when marginalized groups are not granted regular access to political power, given the absence of social institutions or norms that affirm their status and membership rights. It is also a way of looking at social processes that maintain a system of social inequality. Social exclusion theory highlights that maintaining this inequality requires the maintenance of a system of power and domination, which is often invisible. Social exclusion theory draws upon social psychology to understand more about how this is done by creating relevant social categories and roles, thus reproducing and reinforcing the existing social order (Kubota *et al.*, 2022)

Refugee single mothers typically become excluded when confined to society's peripheries. In this article, I reflected on the concept of social exclusion theory in the context of the single mother-headed refugee family, critically exploring how single-mother refugee families are affected by the social construct of social exclusion theory. However, single mothers in Canada and Canadian-born children of refugee mothers face tremendous challenges in terms of psychological well-being due to the high levels of stress that they experience (Kubota *et al.*, 2022). This study aims to describe the prevalence, nature, and impact of these high-stress levels on these single mothers' psychological well-being and examine the interrelated processes that link stressful life events, psychological well-being, and posttraumatic stress symptoms.

In the summer of 2007, a new policy came into effect in Canada. If a government official requested refugee status, they would now be expected to prove that they had no family members or other direct relatives in their country of origin who were being persecuted for their ethnicity, religion, nationality, or political beliefs (Galabuzi, 2004). This change was designed to increase security by encouraging refugees to seek asylum in the country where they were first recognized. However, it also has the practical effect of limiting the number of refugees who have family in the country or are otherwise well-connected to their country of origin. In addition, single mothers are more likely to be affected by family economic hardship than divorced or separated parents.

3.7 Social Exclusion and its Relationship with Exploitation

Social exclusion can have a negative effect on the well-being of single mothers and various forms of exploitation of refugee single mothers. Exploitation is when one party gains a more significant benefit than is fair or reasonable, given the circumstances, and the other party suffers a loss (Zwolinski, Benjamin, and Alan, 2022). One of the most common uses of the term exploitation is in relation to labour exploitation, the practice of employers taking advantage of the labour and

skills of employees. In this context, the term refers to situations in which an employee is exploited by their employer.

According to Gucciardi, Celasun and Stewart (2004), understanding the concept of exploitation among refugee single mothers in Canada requires understanding these individuals' complex social and economic circumstances. For example, over half of single-parent refugee families in Canada are headed by women, a rate higher than single-parent Canadian-born families and the national average. Also, single-mother refugee families are less likely to receive public assistance than single-mother Canadian-born families, suggesting that their socioeconomic circumstances are comparable to those of other single-mother families in Canada (Gucciardi, Celasun and Stewart (2004). However, this socioeconomic equality masks a much bleaker reality for single-mother refugee families.

Exploitation is a complex, multifaceted concept that refers to the unequal power and authority between two or more parties in a relationship. In its most basic form, exploitation occurs when one person takes advantage of the other, which can be expressed in various behaviours and circumstances. While exploitation is often associated with the sex industry, it has a much broader range of manifestations in other areas of society (Francis, 2009). For example, it has been argued that the exploitation of housemaids in Asian immigration communities in Canada has affected the well-being of female immigrants and their children in various ways. These include limiting their access to education and employment, increasing their sense of isolation, and lowering their self-esteem. According to Lombard (2005), unemployment is crucial because of its connection to poverty and because it causes social exclusion by reducing self-esteem, demotivating workers, and worsening the social environment.

Additionally, the exploitation of vulnerable populations occurs when people with a power relationship over another (typically a disadvantaged population) are denied access to resources and cannot make decisions about their lives, causing them to struggle (Daoud *et al.*, 2019). There are three types of exploitation: material, psychological, and sexual. Material exploitation occurs when people gain wealth through the use of others, either through coercion or deception. Psychological exploitation occurs when people gain power by using their control over another. For example, early in the 1990s, a single mother living in a small town in western Canada was visited by a social worker. The social worker was concerned about her 15-year-old daughter and recommended that the family participate in a federally funded study to improve the lives of displaced refugee children. The single mother agreed but was skeptical about the purpose of the randomized controlled study.

In conclusion, this study draws motivation from personal experiences that tend to link directly with the social exclusion assumptions. Therefore, the study's primary objective was to empirically investigate these prevalent experiences with refugee single mothers and provide an empirical conclusion and possible recommendation that can make a difference in the lives of refugee single mothers in Canada and worldwide.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter provides the methods and discussion on the research design and the narrative methodologies adopted for this study. In addition, it discussed the selection of participants, ethical considerations and methods of data coding and analysis.

4.2. Research Design

The qualitative methodology was used to achieve the aim of this study, which is to explore the experiences of refugee single mothers during the Covid-19 pandemic in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. In addition, it aims to identify the group of respondents whose collective views and perceptions would assist me in forming valuable judgments for this study. Moreover, qualitative research methodology was necessary as it provides a deeper understanding of the research questions, which were then used to understand the current research problem of single mother refugees (Creswell, 2014). In particular, using qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews enabled the study to explore women's life experiences and record their unique stories. In addition, the study adopted a systematic sampling approach (Bellhouse, 1988) to capture women as subject matter experts on their unique life experiences and are truly ready to welcome any adjustments required to reduce societal injustice.

4.3. Narrative Methods

This study adopts the narrative method, one of the qualitative approaches to research. The narrative method of qualitative inquiry examines and describes the formation of personal or community stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The qualitative narrative study explored how the pandemic

impacted the experiences of refugee single mothers in Ottawa regarding job prospects. This study employed this method as it gives participants room to express themselves and give full details and exposure to their experience. In addition, using the narrative analysis method allowed the study to understand and appreciate how each participant constructed a story from their personal experience (Butina, 2015). Specifically, the study used storytelling as a narrative method. Storytelling as a narrative method refers to "narrating into a story" and, to a much lower extent, to "telling and listening to a story" (Richter *et al.*, 2019). The storytelling technique, which is used to transmit stories, is rooted in cultural and social situations. The narrative approach enabled this study to collect narratives (stories) from the participants through interviews.

4.4 Selection of Participants

The sampling method used is purposeful sampling. Sampling is the process of choosing a subset of a population to study. The most common form of sampling is simple random sampling. In this method, the entire population is randomly selected to be studied. This approach is appropriate when the researcher does not know the people of interest or does not want samples full of bias. However, purposeful sampling is a method that helps give in-depth information about occurrences (Tongco, 2007). In addition, purposeful sampling enabled the study to recruit and interview individuals that meet the selection criteria, consequently increasing the credibility and trustworthiness of their experiences. This sampling method is essential because this study aims to examine the in-depth experiences of refugee single mothers in Ottawa, Canada, during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Also, the research took place in Ottawa after being approved by the Research Ethics Board, with one 30-to-120-minute interview with the option of a follow-up interview. The study estimated to interview five to ten refugee single mothers in Ottawa but interviewed six refugee single mothers.

The study focused on refugees seeking asylum in Canada through the in-Canada Asylum Program (ICAP). The participants comprised six refugee women from the refugee category of refugees who did the in-Canada Asylum Program (ICAP). These enabled the study to understand the crisis refugee single mothers who participated in the ICAP faced during the pandemic.

Table 1: Demography information

Code Name	Country of origin	Age range	Number of children	Year of entry	Refugee Status	Employment status	Previous Occupation
Diana	Kenya	30-35	3	2022	Refugee claimant	Unemployed	Interior designer
Francesca	Ethiopia	25-30	4	2022	Refugee claimant	Unemployed	Accountant
Agnes	Nigeria	35-40	2	2018	Refugee claimant	Employed	Administrative officer
Trisha	Nigeria	40-45	3	2018	Conventional refugee	Part-time Student	Sales representative
Unis	Ghana	35-40	3	2018	Conventional refugee	Employed	Store owner

Maltida	Nigeria	40-45	3	2017	Conventional I refugee	Full-time Student	Assistant to lecturar
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The study used purposive, convenience, and, most significantly, theoretical sampling in accordance with grounded theory sampling procedures to create my sample. Theoretical sampling according to Charmaz (2014), "Theoretical sampling can entail studying documents, conducting observations, or participating in new social worlds as well as interviewing or reinterviewing with a focus on your theoretical codes" (p. 206). My knowledge of the tenets of the Refugee Act of 1980 was helpful in my sampling process and my connection with the social circles of refugee single women. I begin with convenient and purposeful sampling, and whenever I can, I switch to theoretical sampling.

4.5. Method of data collection

A semi-structured interview is a method for data collection for this study. The semi-structured interview method (SSIM) is an interview technique that can elicit information from individuals, groups or organizations. The semi-structured interview is a method of data collection used in qualitative research. Instead of asking a series of fixed questions, the semi-structured questionnaire allows the interviewer to probe and explore the topic of interest in greater depth. This data collection method has many advantages, such as greater depth of understanding and better responses, but it also comes with challenges.

Notably, the semi-structured questionnaire method, also known as the semi-structured interview, is a method of gathering data in which a series of questions are posed to a person or group rather than being directed and structured in a particular way (Butina, 2015). This method allows for a more flexible approach to data collection and is often more accurate than other methods, such as

closed or open-ended questions. It also allows the interviewer to gather more information from the respondent than if they had used a different method, such as the closed-ended question. However, the semi-structured interview has some limitations.

The semi-structured interview method is an effective method for collecting reliable information. It was developed in the early 1950s for psychological research and was first used in this context in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Butina, 2015). The semi-structured interview method has been used extensively in assessing 30 abused refugee women chosen from a large sample by collaborative local community groups that assist refugees by Damra and Abujilban (2022). In this research, the semi-structured interview method was used to source information from six (6) refugee single mothers who lived in Ottawa during the Covid-19 pandemic. The research question was modified to be less comprehensive. The research question is usually what people want to know, which is why the semi-structured questionnaire method is so popular as follows:

4.6 Interview

This study adopted an interviews research approach as it is considered a great way to engage with an audience to obtain information about their personal life stories, such as the experience of refugee single mothers. This method can also help one communicate with people who are more resistant to change. In this research, observing and analyzing how interviewees discuss and justify their arguments served as the way to get to the desired answers. It made it possible to get the desired answers using participants (Levitt et al. 2018). This technique helps to quote the interviewee's statements without resorting to a lengthy explanation of their answers. Additionally, interviewing at a safe and private facility encouraged participants to participate and assured them that their identity remained confidential. The casual and more conversational interview helped participants not feel restricted in choosing words and information shared.

4.7 Data Coding and Analysis

Data coding and analysis is the process of writing and organizing data from different sources to interpret data and understand statistical findings. The aim of data coding is to make sense of the collected evidence by analyzing the data and making effective inferences and decisions. It is a task requiring high statistical expertise and experience. Coding is significant and could be seen as a cord that connects the data associated with the ideas of the study. Still, it has always been underrated and mostly forgotten by researchers at the beginning of the research (Saldana, 2013; pg. 1-8).

4.7.1 In Vivo Coding Style

The In Vivo coding style is a coding style that is designed to help researchers be more productive in research. It is a coding style developed and used extensively by the research community. In vivo coding is a style of qualitative data coding used for analysis that focuses more on the actual spoken words of research participants. Though the in vivo style is considered among the most common names attributed to the coding style, it can also be referred to as literal, verbatim, or natural (Saldaña, 2016). In some studies, the In Vivo style is used chiefly alongside other types of coding depending on the study's objective. However, most studies adopt it as the only coding style and still produce efficient results. The reason is that the coding style does not encourage the loss of the words the participants use to describe their experiences and helps retain the originality of their experiences in this study.

As Charmaz (2014) stated, the in vivo coding style was used to aid in the development of grounded theory. However, though the in vivo coding style is mainly preferred by grounded theorists, other qualitative researchers presently use it as well. Especially ethnographers and researchers involved

with case studies adopt in vivo coding style to better understand the jargon, slang and other specialized vernaculars encouraged in various language backgrounds (Manning & Kunkel, 2014). In vivo coding can also provide an in-depth understanding of ideas through stories and actual words of participants (Saldaña, 2016). Therefore, this study adopted the in vivo coding style to enable a detailed exploration of the stories of refugee single mothers and provide a detailed analysis that will form a reliable answer to the research question. Furthermore, considering that most single mother refugees are from various ethnicities, cultures, languages and backgrounds, the in vivo coding style is deemed most appropriate in capturing and giving meaning to most specialized vernaculars encountered due to the diverse background of the participants.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

4.8.1 Data Collection Bias

Collecting data means that researchers may find it impossible to draw conclusions that are as robust as those that have been made. The study ensured that accurate and complete data about this research phenomenon was collected to overcome bias. Blum & Fagan (2007) and Alabaugh & Wicker (2013) recognize the dominance of the quantitative approach to data analysis. The typical bias is evident in many ways: the focus on quantification and interpretation has placed scholars in a binary position: either ignoring or analyzing the qualitative data. Moreover, the boundaries between qualitative and quantitative research are often indistinct. Notably, the first word that comes to mind with ethical consideration is bias. As a refugee single mother, my experiences helped ensure that this study proceeded without bias and explored and answered the research questions.

4.8.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is defined as the extent to which information is kept secret in the research process or to which research is not reported (Damra & Abujilban, 2022). As with many qualitative pieces of research, there are risks to be considered. Ethics codes are clear that research studies should maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants (Webster *et al.*, 2003 pg. 96). Therefore, adherence to confidentiality is needed never to breach the principle of disclosure and confidentiality. The participants were told they had the right to withdraw from the research, and the time frame was given till May 31st, 2022, for them to withdraw if they felt the need to do so. It will let them realize that as much as it is purely academic research, there is a tendency for it to be considered in the journals as a point of reference for many others, but their identities will always be protected. As such, they are aware of how their experience may be documented and used.

4.8.3 Data Validation

Data collection was performed as a one-on-one interview with participants. It was done to maximize the likelihood of an accurate response and ensure that participants' responses were kept confidential. The study adopted some ethical principles to be able to use the data in a meaningful way. The data must be already collected and analyzed to start. If not, it can't be used to produce reliable results. Also, we need to ensure the data is anonymous and not identifiable.

Therefore, this study considered validating the data and consent during the research process to affirm their total interest and ensure accurately recorded experiences. Data collected were kept separately in different folders from their identities and locked away separately due to confidentiality, which was thoroughly explained to the intended participants.

4.9 Method of Data Analysis

The interview processes adopted for this study were performed simultaneously, improving the comprehension of the entire data processing. Therefore, separating the interviews from the transcribing, translation, and analysis procedures was difficult. The study focused on each participant's verbal, visual, and structural methods and the environment in which the interview was conducted while conducting the narrative analysis. Different representational techniques used by the participants included changing body language, voice and pace, and words and gestures were also observed (Riessman, 2003).

The study used the Covid-19 procedures outlined by Creswell and Guetterman (2019) for evaluating qualitative data, including

- 1) Preparing and organizing the data for analysis
- 2) Using the coding process to conduct an initial exploration of the data
- 3) Applying the codes to create a more comprehensive picture of the data
- 4) Provided the interview results through the narratives method
- 5) interpreted the meaning of the interview results by personally considering the effect of the relevant literature that may have influenced the findings
- 6) implemented techniques to verify the validity of the results.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

The objective of this study was to examine how the Covid-19 pandemic influenced the experiences of refugee single mothers in Ottawa regarding access to material and social rights provisions. The study adopted a qualitative methodology and used a narrative analysis method that focused on stories of how the pandemic affected single refugee mothers and their experiences. The goal of this analysis was achieved by allowing participants to hear their unique narrative accounts. The six participants interviewed were given pseudonyms: Diana, Francesca, Trisha, Unis, Agnes and Maltida. The study reviewed transcription of the interviews on multiple occasions to spot participant repetition in terms of words and phrases for thematic analysis. The section presents the analysis of the responses from the respondents individually and later offers themes across the respondents. Finally, each theme and sub-themes were discussed and presented in the narrative illustration to provide a summary of the inductive approach adopted for analyzing qualitative data

5.2 Presentation of Result and Analysis

5.2.1 Background Information

Below are the demographic characteristics of the participants in the interview session

Table 2: Demographic description of the participants

Coding	Method of interview	Duration of the	Interview Status
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		interview	
		w	
D	In-person	42 min.	Recorded and notes were taken.
F	In-person	55 min.	Recorded and notes were taken.
U	ZOOM	35 min.	Recorded and notes were taken.
A	Telephone	30 min.	Recorded and notes were taken.
T	In-person	50 min.	Recorded and notes were taken.
TR	ZOOM	37min.	Not recorded - only notes were taken.

The demographic characteristics of the participants for the interview session are presented in Table 1. As reported in the table, the interview session lasted between 42 and 55 minutes with six respondents. The interview took place in physical (3 participants), ZOOM (2 participants) and telephone (1 participant) modes among the six respondents.

5.2.1i Year of migration

Participants were asked when they migrated to seek asylum (refugee status) in Canada. They responded

Table 3: Year of migration

Year	Respondent code
------	-----------------

2022	D & F
2018	U, A & M
2017	T

As reported, three (3) of the respondents sought refugee status in the year 2018, two (2) in the year 2022, and one (1) in the year 2017.

5.2.1ii Refugee's status

Participants were also asked about their refugee status, and they responded.

Table 4: Refugee's status

Status	Respondent code
Refugee claimant	D, T, F
Conventional refugee	T, R, M

As presented, three of the respondents are refugee claimants, while three are conventional refugees

5.2.1iii Period of being a single mother

When asked about the participants becoming single mothers, they commented:

Table 5: Period of being a single mother

Year	Respondent code
2022	D
2019	F, A
2018	T
2017	R, M

As presented, two (2) of the respondents became single mothers in 2017 and 2019, respectively, and one (1) in 2022, while the last person became a single mother in 2018.

5.2.2 Themes Categorization

Twelve (12) themes were discovered throughout the analysis, although with varied strengths. The choice of selecting a theme to be significant is based on the frequency of occurrence and was adopted from Tsai, Barr and Welch (2017). Considering the number of participants, six, any theme that occurred at least twice in the story of the 6 participants is considered relevant.

Table 6: Themes

No	Themes
1	Migrant
2	Refugee status
3	period as a single mother

4	feeling about single mother status
5	COVID-19 pandemic lockdown impact
6	survival strategies during COVID-19
7	Caring for children during the pandemic
8	Health and Life strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic
9	Received support
10	Adequacy of the Support
11	Expected Support
12	Exploitation

After identifying the recurring themes in the participants' stories, the study first considered the broad experience of refugee single mothers using the identified themes as a point of concentration. Therefore, all quotes from the respondents will be placed in italics, and the reports are further supported with a visual illustration (word cloud derived from NVIVO 12.0) of the deduction from the responses.

5.2.3 Migrants and Refugee Status

Immigrants are regarded as persons who move across country borders, especially from less-developed to better-developed countries, to secure permanent residence (Tataru, 2019). Also, a refugee is a person who has been forced to flee their homeland to avoid persecution, war or

violence. As Tataru (2019) stated, refugee migrants, are most vulnerable in their new society as they try to integrate into a new culture and environment. They often migrate to a new country with the mindset to improve their lives and are willing to do jobs most natives consider dirty, degrading or dangerous. In most cases, they are subjected to harsh conditions as they try to settle into their new environment. When the participants were asked about their identity as migrants, their comments were as follows;

Table 7: Comments on Migrants and Refugee Status

Question: How do you feel being a migrant with a refugee status?

SUDO Name	Method of Interview	Comments
Diana	In-person	<i>“I had a lot of high hopes migrating from my country; since I came over here as a refugee, I have done a lot of menial jobs which I may not have considered if all things were equal. But I have a son to look after, so I am doing what I must do.”</i>
Francesca	In-person	<i>“It has not been easy as a migrant with refugee status. At first, I found it difficult to secure a decent job, a lot of documentation and all that; being an immigrant here, like I said, it has not been easy”.</i>
Trisha	ZOOM	<i>“Things are just different, though I am happy my kids and I are here but feel horrible when we are treated harshly and abused. I want</i>

		<i>somewhere safe for my kids. I don't care if I am referred to as a migrant. I just want to be safe."</i>
Unis	ZOOM	<i>"I spent almost all my savings to get here. My refugee status as a migrant limits me a lot, and as a single mother, it is even harder, no family, no friends, just I and my child."</i>
Agnes	Telephone	<i>"I find it so very difficult to navigate around to get help, and with many cultural differences, God! It was horrible."</i>
Maltida	In-person	<i>"My kids had difficulty understanding the situation and did not find it easy in school because of the language."</i>

5.2.4 Feelings about Being a Refugee Single Mother

The refugee crisis has recently presented a host of complex challenges and has created significant feelings of helplessness among refugee mothers (Francis, 2019). One of the most pressing concerns has been providing shelter and aid to the millions of single refugee mothers and their children who have fled their countries (Francis, 2019). The current situation in Canada is no different from other parts of the world (Francis, 2019). Canada has been a haven for refugees (Francis, 2019). The country has welcomed people fleeing conflict and human rights abuses in their home countries and has offered them a new start. However, the journey to safety is not always easy, and many refugees single mothers face significant difficulties.

When asked about their feeling about being a refugee single mother, participants commented:

Table 8: Comments on Being a Refugee Single Mother

Question: How do you feel being a refugee single mother?

SUDO Name	Method of Interview	Comments
Diana	In-person	<p><i>"Bad, of course. Taking care of kids with no family is a challenge. I have an autistic child, and it is almost a living hell without my family."</i></p> <p><i>"Life as a single mother in Canada is turf."</i></p> <p><i>"People talking about single mothers as if we are a prostitute. That is why I feel isolated most times."</i></p>
Francesca	In-person	<p><i>"Being by yourself is not a good option. I am overwhelmed. I have three kids who are all boys, and it's not easy. Back home, I used to have my mother help me with my child, but no one here."</i></p> <p><i>"I had to do everything on my own, which took a lot of tools in my head."</i></p> <p><i>"Life as a single refugee mother is very hard. So many different layers to it make life more challenging than most."</i></p>
Trisha	ZOOM	<p><i>"I was in a shelter in a strange land where I didn't know anybody; even how the system works is strange. We did not get help to look for a</i></p>

		<p><i>house. We had to look for houses ourselves. A lot of landlords rejected, or some took advantage of us."</i></p> <p><i>"Being a refugee single mother here has some effects. Like Psychological effects, emotional and physical effects, sexual effects and financial effects".</i></p> <p><i>"It is hard to contribute fully to my children's lives, which impacts their ability to learn and grow well, " I feel. "</i></p>
Unis	ZOOM	<p><i>"Being a refugee single mother in Canada is terrible and hard because back home in Africa, we are used to having our relatives around."</i></p> <p><i>"A single refugee mother here in Canada, you have to deal with financing and providing for the kids."</i></p> <p><i>"I feel a lot of responsibility for being my child's sole provider."</i></p>
Agnes	Telephone	<p><i>"I came in four months pregnant. Then, finally, I gave birth, and that was when the real life of a single mother fully began for me."</i></p> <p><i>"Many refugee single mothers like me in Canada experience a difficult life."</i></p>
Maltida	In-person	<p><i>"I can say the term single refugee mother alone is pregnant with many words of experience, both with ups and downs of life."</i></p>

		<p><i>"It's like you are waking up in reality. What is done by two people now becomes one person's job, and I tell you, the weight at times is a lot."</i></p> <p><i>"It is isolating because I don't have the support of my family."</i></p>
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Unequivocal, most participants expressed that being a refugee single mother in Canada is complex, challenging, isolating and stressful for them. Participants expressed that there is a lack of family support to take care of their kids, unlike support received from their home country. Another participant commented that they experienced the psychological, emotional and physical effects of others as a single mother. In addition, others expressed that they faced a financial challenge in caring for themselves and their children. The cultural and language difference also affected the children's relationships with others in the school. According to Stewart *et al.* (2015), refugee women and girls have been some of the most vulnerable people impacted by the world's current refugee crisis. For many women, who are often heads of their households, escaping conflict and persecution has meant leaving behind their homes, communities, and the lives they knew. The journey to safety has been fraught with danger and uncertainties for others forced to flee their homes. For single mothers, in particular, being separated from the support network of their partner and family members has only added to their difficulties as they attempt to create a new life for themselves and their children in Canada (Stewart *et al.*, 2015). As a single refugee mother, I have experienced difficulties raising a family in a new country. I immigrated to Canada some years ago with my child, who was then a toddler. Since then, I have worked hard to build a life for my family. I have faced financial hardships and sometimes struggled to find the right job to support my family.

Similarly, some single refugee mothers I have met face many challenges in Canada. They face a pattern of isolation, uncertainty, and stigma, which can lead to depression, anxiety, and even suicidal thoughts.

5.2.5 COVID-19 pandemic lockdown impact on a single mother

When asked about the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown experiences as a refugee single mother in Canada, participants commented:

Question: How did the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown impact you as a refugee single mother?

Table 9: Comment on the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown impact on a single mother

SUDO Name	Method of Interview	Comments
Diana	In-person	<i>"The COVID-19 pandemic lockdown was one of the most challenging times of my life. I was thrown into a world of panic and uncertainty, where I had to navigate through an unfamiliar system where I didn't know anyone and had no one to turn to for help. I felt isolated and alone, and the anxiety and fear that I thought at that time was something I never dreamt I would have to experience due to a pandemic."</i>

		<p><i>"I was still in my country when the pandemic started, I lost my job, and the abuse experienced from her husband increased. He saw every reason to beat me up even though I did nothing wrong". On coming to Canada, I was happy and left the abusive situation back home, but she missed her family".</i></p> <p><i>" In Canada, because of the Covid-19 restrictions, there was no daycare where I could keep my child, and this limited my chances of securing a job to take care of my basic needs."</i></p>
Francesca	In-person	<p><i>"I have not found it easy at all. At times it feels like I am in prison. Honestly, I am not coping well. I am depressed. I have never experienced not working or losing a job, but I did during the pandemic, which I find hard. I have no personal life."</i></p> <p><i>"There was no job anywhere. Even when I tried to take an online job, I lost the job because I have to take care of my children and was considered ineffective".</i></p>
Trisha	ZOOM	<p><i>"For me, the frustration was terrible. I have a park not too far from my house, and my children will wake up in the morning, especially when they were stopped from going to school. They will say they want to go</i></p>

		<p><i>to the park. So I had to stop them every morning at a point whenever they said that and explain why they could not go to the park."</i></p> <p><i>"The pandemic lockdown was one of the most challenging times in my life."</i></p> <p><i>" most times, I would wish I had a job so I could do more for my children. But, unfortunately, I was finding it difficult to provide something as basic as food. It was terrible."</i></p>
<p>Unis</p>	<p>ZOOM</p>	<p><i>"It was horrible, and these are the kind of days I don't even want to remember. I remember when I was in a shelter, in a room shelter with three kids making four of us. We were restricted in the house, didn't have access to food, didn't even have to assess the kitchen, and I had my daughter for around a year, almost two years ago, when the pandemic struck. It affected her development, and we had regression; the autism setting came because she was not allowed to attend daycare. So we were indoors for close to like three good months. They told us not to do anything, to stay indoors."</i></p> <p><i>"To make things worse, as no one can go out freely, job opportunities are limited. As refugee single mothers, we find it difficult to be considered for a job and being a refugee made things even more difficult."</i></p>

<p>Agnes</p>	<p>Telephone</p>	<p><i>"Some owed me money, but they refused to pay me because of the pandemic. I cried several times as there was no one to help me. I could not apply for government funds as I was without status at the start of the pandemic in the USA, so I risked being deported. I was overwhelmed without help."</i></p> <p><i>"I was a fun parent, who loved to laugh, but COVID-19 made me dull, and my boys did not understand. They were wondering why mummy could not take them out and have fun. I fell into depression. I was emotionally saturated and disturbed as I felt I had lost myself to the pandemic. Life itself was difficult, and it was as if I was caged. I had self-guilt that I brought my family here to be caged. The children had no routine different from what was happening before."</i></p> <p><i>"I am the only one with the kids, and sometimes I feel stranded."</i></p>
<p>Maltida</p>	<p>In-person</p>	<p><i>"The pandemic has been turf on my children and me in Canada."</i></p> <p><i>"My life in Canada is turf that I feel stranded most times. I feel like I am in prison at times."</i></p> <p><i>"No visitors are allowed in the building due to COVID-19."</i></p>

Table 10: Survival strategies during COVID-19

SUDO Name	Method of Interview	Comments
Diana	In-person	<p><i>"I started enquiring about how to get help and gradually got more information. I now volunteer to help my children go to school. Still, until now, my autistic child does have a worker and has not been diagnosed as autistic in Canada. He is going to school in the same class as other kids, but in my country, he went to a different school with kids that are autistic too, which helped him improve, but here it's different. I tried to look for a family doctor, but till now, we are still on a waitlist. "</i></p>
Francesca	In-person	<p><i>"I had to use the little I got from my job to meet some of their demands, like food, clothes, books and money to buy data bundles for their online classes."</i></p> <p><i>"I used the help of a psychologist to help my children. Then, I started reading more tips on how to parent online."</i></p>
Trisha	ZOOM	<p><i>"Fortunately, we had some awesome organizations that came to help us a by supplying us all oatmeal and other foods at the shelter, which helped us, but the experience was horrible."</i></p>

		<i>"Doing my best so my kids do not get exposed and fall sick. They only go to school and only go to very important activities."</i>
Unis	ZOOM	<i>"I make the children wash their hands as often as possible. I make sure we eat a balanced diet and live healthily".</i>
Agnes	Telephone	<i>"I survived by following the pandemic's general rules and ensuring they don't go out. I don't allow people into my house; if we have to go out, we have to go out with our masks. We have our sanitizer generally always giving space, and I kept following the news for updates to see what is going on and how the pandemic is treating everybody around the world."</i>
Maltida	In-person	<i>"I enlightened my kids on the dangers of the COVID-19 pandemic and the new normal. You know that is our new way of life. It is not written but, unfortunately, is real. COVID has come to stay whether we like it or not. Just like we can leave with malaria and other diseases, we should also be able to leave with COVID. And how do we go about this? Constant hand washing, continuous</i>

psychologists and volunteers. The children also received online classes. In addition, participants ensure they eat a balanced diet and maintain good hygiene during the lockdown period. Figure 2 presents the frequency of the common words used by the respondents to describe their survival strategies during the COVID-19 lockdown.

5.2.7 Caring for children during the pandemic

As a follow-up question, participants were asked how they cared for their children during the COVID-19 lockdown. Their comments are as follows:

Questions: How did you care for your kids during the pandemic?

Table 11: Comments on caring for children during the pandemic

SUDO Name	Method of Interview	Comments
Diana	In-person	<p><i>"The safety of the kids was important to me during the pandemic, especially my child, who is autistic. I was scared of what could happen to him. He is a special-needs child, so I am always around for him. I would clean the kids' hands so many times to make sure they eat healthily."</i></p> <p><i>"I started reading online for services that could help me. I saw some counselling information which helped me. I became more positive, and I took care of my children. I got a volunteer position which helped me</i></p>

		<i>socialize. The only thing is, till now, my child who is autistic hasn't been able to be in school for kids with special needs."</i>
Francesca	In-person	<i>"I used a psychologist's help with my children. I started reading more tips on how to parent online".</i>
Trisha	ZOOM	<i>"I stopped my kids from going on the school bus. I make sure that I drop them off in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon for a very long time just to ensure that we're not in contact with anybody. Once they're home, I send them to the bathroom to have a hot bath, and then I give them hot ginger tea just to ensure that we don't have any infections."</i>
Unis	ZOOM	<i>"I was very fortunate to have an amazing support system from the few friends I have made in Canada who helped me navigate this difficult time. It was an emotional time for me."</i>
Agnes	Telephone	<i>"I started teaching my children myself at home. It was not an easy task as the boys sometimes did not listen. But, they are boys, and they love to do their own thing being rough."</i>

Maltida	In-person	<i>"Teaching them more about personal hygiene and all that."</i>
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Participants expressed that they could take care of the children during the COVID-19 lockdown by cleaning their hands as much as possible, ensuring that they eat healthily, having a bath as soon as they return from school and teaching them personal hygiene. Others expressed that they seek help online for counselling information, joining volunteers for socialization and stopping their children from going to school to prevent them from contracting the virus. The difficulties single refugee mothers face in discussions about refugee resettlement in Ottawa have been well documented. Discussions of refugee resettlement often centre on the experiences of families with children, but single mothers make up a significant portion of the refugee population in Canada. They often face several challenges when attempting to access services, express their needs, and make decisions on their behalf. This thesis aims to deepen our understanding of the experiences of single refugee mothers in Ottawa and analyses how these women are represented in the public discourse on refugee resettlement. It is worth noting that Canada has seen a significant increase in the number of refugee claimants, many of whom are single mothers and their children (Hurly, 2019). These women have been forced to flee their homes due to war, persecution, and human rights violations (Hurly, 2019). In Canada, they hope to find safety, security, and the opportunity to build a better life for their children, which is not attained. However, the journey is not easy, and these women's difficulties are often overlooked in the broader discussion about Canada's refugee system and the current influx of migrants (Hurly, 2019).

5.2.8 Health and Life strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic

Participants were further asked to care for themselves regarding their health and life during the pandemic. The following is an extract from their expression:

Questions: How did you maintain a healthy lifestyle during the Covid-19 pandemic

Table 12: Comment on Health and Life strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic

SUDO Name	Method of Interview	Comments
Diana	In-person	<i>"I started volunteering when the kids went to school, which helped me balance. The level of depression reduced as I could socialize a bit and sometimes buy treats for myself. I learnt from counselling to always take care of myself ".</i>
Francesca	In-person	<i>"Yes, I love the craft. The craft was another therapy for me. I do the craft. I started teaching a friend how to do crafts and improving my craft skills, which also helped me. Oh! My love for the craft is so great, and my love increased during the pandemic. I'm very conscious of my mental health. What I practice daily is mindfulness and make sure to take that breath and take 5 minutes for myself to calm myself down."</i>

Trisha	ZOOM	<i>"I had some counselling. I reached out to a friend to whom I could tell what was happening without being judged, and she will talk to me, advise and pray for me."</i>
Unis	ZOOM	<i>"I exercised, walked, did yoga and much more. Of course, calorie restriction was another critical factor, but also essential to note is the increased variety of foods I was eating: more vegetables, fruit, and diverse, less processed foods. I think I did as much as possible to mitigate the pandemic's impact, and I feel like I had a lot of support."</i>
Agnes	Telephone	<i>"I also practice yoga, listen to music, read books when school is back, do my assignments on time, and eat well. Finally, I can show you my pictures."</i>
Maltida	In-person	<p><i>"I looked for online activities and reached out for some counselling activities."</i></p> <p><i>" I learnt a lot and am still learning how to be kind and love myself."</i></p>

5.2.9 Support received

As a follow-up question, participants were asked about the support received during the pandemic from the Government, communities or other individuals. Their comments are as follows:

Questions: What support did you receive during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Table 13: Comments on Support received

SUDO Name	Method of Interview	Comments
Diana	In-person	<p><i>"Yes, I am very grateful that we did receive a lot of support from the Government from the community. I think they paid each kid two \$200, then. We have our community housing around the shelter that gave us gift cards that we can use."</i></p> <p><i>"People got across to us. I have a friend from Germany, Europe, the USA and Africa that connected with me. I had many of them in terms of physical needs, even in excess. In terms of PPE, face masks and all that. Then Emotional, yeah, the financial needs."</i></p>
Francesca	In-person	<p><i>"It helped me a lot in paying my house rent, even though it is a community-based rent, you know, government housing. It assisted me</i></p>

		<i>in so many things. The food bank was great. I was asked to come to get food weekly. Yes, the increment, the \$3 increment. It was \$4 initially, which motivated everyone to work at that time."</i>
Trisha	ZOOM	<i>"The school, my kid attends gave us a \$500 gift card and a voucher that we can use at Loblaws, which helped us for a very long time. Also, as I said earlier, there was a Kitchen oat meals food that supplied us lunch every day; we survived on that too."</i>
Unis	ZOOM	<i>"I also got free shelter from Ontario works, which I am grateful for." "Yes, I did. I have received support from my few friends. I was supported by my family from back home through phone calls when there was a stable network. I also received support from the local church, and some months ago, they gave us \$600 gift cards, and they do that yearly around December. Also, some money from the Government. I'm going to say yes, I received a lot of support."</i>
Agnes	Telephone	<i>"The Government did provide help. I think the Government gave us \$200 twice. Apart from the \$200, there was a one-time payment of \$60 by the Government."</i>

much help than the ones from the Government. Most participants got permission, but the financial support was not enough.

5.2.10 Adequacy of Support.

As a follow-up to the kind of support received during the Covid-19 pandemic and the support they expected, participants were asked if they received enough support to help during the pandemic.

An extract of the comments is presented below:

Question: How adequate is the support you received?

Table 14: Comments on Adequacy of the Support.

SUDO Name	Method of Interview	Comments
Diana	In-person	<i>“I did not get support for my child with a special need, so I feel the support I received was not entirely enough. Food was also a problem as sometimes we only have expired food.”</i>
Francesca	In-person	<i>“I had to rely on food banks for food during the pandemic. Even though I didn’t get everything I ever wanted in life, I ate well and fed healthy previously before the pandemic, but being given expired food made me sad.”</i>

Trisha	ZOOM	<i>"In Canada, the support was at least better than not receiving anything."</i>
Unis	ZOOM	<i>"I had little help from my few friends and family, which was not enough as I wished."</i>
Agnes	Telephone	<i>"Though I was happy for the shelter and support, most of the time, the food I get is not what I eat normally. Some are even expired food that when I get home, I cry when I see it".</i>
Maltida	In-person	<i>"Though I was happy for the shelter and support, we didn't get enough food that we understand. The food bank gave us was not the kind of food we usually eat, so I couldn't take some."</i>

5.2.11 Expected Support

The participants were asked about the support expected to be provided during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their comments are presented below:

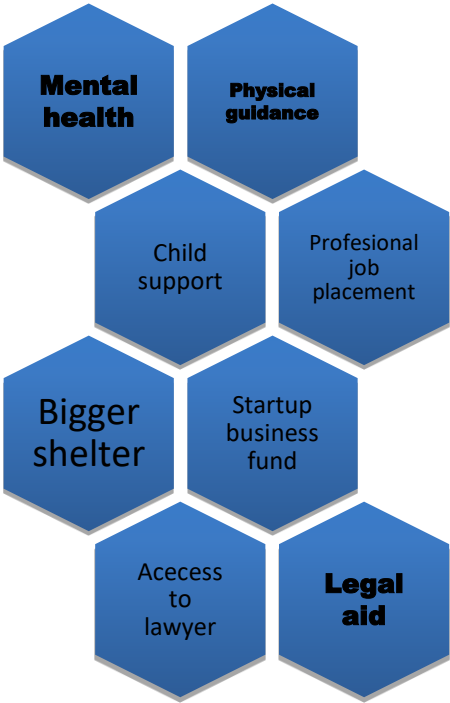
Questions: What were your expected supports?

Table 15: Comments on Expected Support

SUDO Name	Method of Interview	Comments
Diana	In-person	<p><i>"Provide more information for the parent with autistic kids. Someone to help babysit so I can at least have some break."</i></p> <p><i>"Some of us are educated and should be allowed to get professional jobs."</i></p>
Francesca	In-person	<p><i>"I would have loved it if the government introduced many people who can help with mental health talk next time."</i></p> <p><i>"That can check people to see how they are doing and coping because we are all just stuck in there without information about what is happening outside."</i></p> <p><i>"I wish there were more physical guidance or support."</i></p>
Trisha	ZOOM	<p><i>"I believe more physiological help should be given to us. Transportation help should be given more. Kids with special needs should be in a school that could cater to their needs, not a public school like other kids as they experience being bullied."</i></p>

Unis	ZOOM	<p><i>"Easy transportation, child services, and support for a refugee who would like to go into business</i></p> <p><i>"The Support I would have loved to have are moving us to a bigger apartment."</i></p>
Agnes	Telephone	<p><i>"I think we need to have strict laws which will support the refugees to get access to their lawyers."</i></p> <p><i>"We have a lot about legal aid, but nobody is doing the monitoring, nobody's doing the regulation check, nobody's working on it, though."</i></p> <p><i>"Like asking questions on how you last talked to your lawyer, another thing is that we don't have the regulatory body to check—no one to question if refugees have access to their lawyers. I have many friends whose lawyers messed up their cases, and the governments are not doing anything about it, which I think is not good. "</i></p>
Maltida	In-person	<p><i>"I don't have access to child care. I don't have a place to put my baby to look for work. So we leave on the \$1000.30 given to us, and I have many bills. I have to pay the house rent. Where do you think I can get money to pay the lawyer? That was like a real headache for me then. I</i></p>

		<p><i>wish the Government would increase the financial benefits given to refugees to help their dilly living conditions."</i></p>
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SUDO Name	Method of Interview	Comments
Diana	In-person	<p><i>“I was exploited several times because of my refugee status.”</i></p> <p><i>“People talk and act towards single mothers as if we are a prostitute.”</i></p>
Francesca	In-person	<p><i>“My experience of being exploited when I was searching for accommodation is not something I am comfortable talking about. It was just inhuman and terrible.”</i></p> <p><i>“Sincerely, the pandemic impacted the opportunities and quality of jobs available and increased the exploitation faced by many women like me in Ottawa.”</i></p>
Trisha	ZOOM	<p><i>“Of course, as a single mother, what do you expect. Job owners tried to take advantage of me. So I can say that the exploitation is real for most single mothers, especially those with refugee status”.</i></p> <p><i>“As a single mother refugee, you are limited in so many ways, and you seek help for any little thing. People want to use it as an avenue to sleep with you (sexual harassment); it is just crazy.”</i></p>
Unis	ZOOM	<p><i>“ Well, I can’t say that I was exploited, though I heard stories of my friends who are also single mothers being exploited while searching for</i></p>

		<i>a job and seeking financial aid during the Covid-19, which is heartbreaking.”</i>
Agnes	Telephone	<p><i>“ All I can say is that it is a sad story because I have felt exploited by some house owners, even some government officials.”</i></p> <p><i>“ I pray that anything like Covid-19 should not happen again, and it brought out the worst human behaviours.”</i></p>
Maltida	In-person	<i>“Being a single mother during the intense Covid-19 period, all I can think of was keeping my kids safe and healthy, and sometimes people try to take advantage of the situation on me.”</i>

As presented in the narrative result, Diana narrated his experiences while hunting for a job during the covid-19 period. She told her own story of exploitation which happened more than once due to her precarious status. Diana did not receive good service and was looked down on, talked and treated like a common prostitute. In Francesca's response, she sincerely narrated how the pandemic affected the opportunities and quality of jobs available, which increased the exploitation she faced. In her experience, she told her story and described how she was being exploited when searching for accommodation though she was uncomfortable giving details. Trisha noted that it is expected for a single mother who is also a refugee to experience exploitation. She narrated how job owners sometimes tried to take advantage of her. Her narrations indicated that when seeking little help, some people will want to take advantage of it by asking her for sex or not even paying for services rendered. In Unis's narratives, she affirmed that some of her friends had experienced one form of exploitation. Their story, which didn't form part of this study, was heartbreaking; however, she

didn't admit that she had been a victim of exploitation. As indicated in the narratives, Agnes noted that the issue of exploiting single mothers is a sad story and that she has felt exploited by some house owners who gave her impossible demands to get accommodation. Her story also indicated that some government officials who were to stop issues are taking advantage of the situation to exploit them too. She acknowledged that the Covid-19 area brought out the worst in human behaviours. Maltida's story also pointed to having been exploited even though all she was trying to do was feed her children during the covid-19 period, yet people take advantage of the situation to exploit her.

These stories align with the study of (Segarra and Prasad, 2020) in the United States of America, which exposed the ill-treatment and exploitation experienced by refugee single mothers in the US. In analyzing this study further, common indices in this study and that of Segarra and Prasad (2020) is that most of the single mothers in this situation of exploitation always find themselves in a situation that makes it impossible for them to speak up. These subject them to unending hardship, lack of security, joblessness, isolation, and poverty. As Nardon *et al.* (2021) affirmed, single mothers experience all kinds of exploitation, making them vulnerable and marginalized as they struggle to provide for themselves and their children.

5.3 Discussion of Results and Findings

This study used six participants for the narrative study using an interview method. The interview focused on the three (3) research questions, subdivided into 12 sub-questions from the categorized themes identified for the study. The discussion of the result will concentrate on using the analysis result to answer the research questions in line with the social exclusion theory adopted as the theoretical framework for the study.

5.3.1 Research Question One

The first research question was restated thus:

How did the Covid-19 pandemic influence access to income necessary for acquiring the basic needs and material needs resulting from opportunities and quality of jobs available for refugee single mothers?

The response to the first research question was categorically collective, with six out of six participants expressing their negative experience of the pandemic and how it influenced their job availability and access to their essential and material needs. For example, Francesca narrated how she could not secure any job and, therefore, could not provide for herself and her children. From the story of Diana, the pandemic had been tough on her and her children in Canada. She was still in her country when the pandemic started, she lost her job, and the abuse she experienced from her husband increased. On coming to Canada, she was happy that she left the abusive situation back home, but she still missed her family though the Covid-19 situation prevented her from getting a job. Also, Francesca narrated that there was no job anywhere, and when she attempted to do an online gig job, she was ineffective as she had to take care of her children and had no daycare available. With no job and no money for rent, she and her kids had to manage to stay in a shelter with drug addicts and people of different behaviours. She complained severally to her case worker that the shelter was not safe for her kids, but nothing was done about it.

In Trisha's story, she wished she had a job because she was finding it challenging to provide food for her child, which is a basic necessity. Agnes narrated how she could not even recover the money she was owed for a job done previously because of Covid-19 and how she attempted to access government relief funds but could not because, as of then, she was without status and risked being

deported. Unis narrated how the restriction limited job opportunities and, to make things worse, the available jobs were either not for refugees or not suitable for single mothers. From the study result, the pandemic's impact on the participant's livelihood and employment status was not entirely pleasant. It is evident that several refugees, especially the ones that are single mothers, have experienced extreme trauma, starvation, and poor accommodation because of a lack of jobs to earn income. Some who even requested government funds were rejected because of their refugee status.

In Canada, the plight of single mothers is a cause of great concern. Amadala (2012) found that being a single refugee mother would imply that the woman would likely be coping with the difficulties that refugees often face, the difficulties of being a newcomer, and the difficulties of being a lone parent all at once. According to Camargo-Plazas et al. (2022, pg. 1), “Refugees and single mothers (which also includes refuge single mothers), new migrants, older adults, racialized and other minority individuals live in poverty in Canada.” Hence, their statement suggests that refugee single mothers are most likely to live in the most impoverished areas of Canada due to their financial instability. ⁹Canada without poverty (2022) posted facts about poverty that people who are considered to be racialized, for some examples, are recent migrants, refugees in general, and other minority groups encounter various forms of difficulties. These groups face difficulties getting good jobs and having better homes due to being discriminated against when searching for jobs and not being able to benefit from some government resources and benefits (Canada without poverty, 2022). Therefore, refugee single mothers must find a way to find a job or become residential careers to survive.

⁹ <https://cwp-csp.ca/>

A refugee single mother's contribution to society can tremendously impact her child's life. However, the Canadian government model for a family is based on the belief that families are made up of a single father (one parent) and a single mother (two parents). It is patriarchal that is not anticipated to change. However, the Government is not likely to promote this model.

It affirms the postulations of the social exclusion theory. These have raised concerns among Canadians, who wonder why the Government is only focused on supporting the needs of the traditional family unit when single mothers struggle to make ends meet in Canada. Amadala (2012), in her study, revealed that single mothers who come to Canada as refugees often face additional challenges when trying to find employment and support for their families. It is because many Ottawa organizations are unfamiliar with the unique circumstances of refugee single mothers. The negative impact on these women's well-being and their families has created a barrier to the successful integration of these women into Canadian society, which is essential to the country's prosperity. The Canadian Government has long welcomed refugees, but the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the complex and complicated reality for single mothers. Many single mothers immigrating to Canada are fleeing violence and persecution in their home countries and are now struggling to find assistance in their new homes (Amadala, 2012).

5.3.2 Research Question two

The second research question was restated thus:

How did the Covid-19 pandemic influence the employment services rendered to refugee single mothers regarding increased exploitation faced by refugee single mothers in Ottawa, Canada?

The issue of exploitation regarding refugees, especially single mothers, has been reported in many studies. From the result of this study, the story seems similar as the participants narrate their

experience trying to secure a job during the Covid-19 period. Diana admitted that she had been exploited several times because of her precarious status and stated how people talked about and treated her life as if she were a prostitute. Francesca responded sincerely to how the pandemic impacted the opportunities and quality of jobs available and increased the exploitation faced by refugee single mothers in Ottawa. She also narrated her exploitation experience when searching for accommodation though she was uncomfortable giving details. Trisha noted that it is expected for a single mother who is also a refugee to experience exploitation. She narrated how job owners sometimes tried to take advantage of her. Her narrations indicated that when seeking little help, some people will want to take advantage of it by asking her for sex or not even paying for services rendered. Unis indicated in her narrative that she could not say she was exploited. However, she can affirm refugee single mothers' exploitation with the stories of her friends searching for jobs or financial assistance during Covid-19, and she stated that it was heartbreaking. In her own story, Agnes noted that the issue of exploiting single mothers is a sad story and that she has felt exploited by some house owners who gave her impossible demands to get accommodation. Her story indicated that some government officials who are supposed to caution against their issues are taking advantage of the situation to exploit them. She acknowledged that the Covid-19 area brought out the worst in human behaviours. Maltida stated that being a refugee single mother during the intense Covid-19 period, she could only think of keeping her kids safe and healthy. Still, people take advantage of the situation to exploit her sometimes.

A common factor in these narratives is that most participants are unwilling to provide more detailed information on the nature of the exploitation they experience. However, the narrative repeatedly identified sexual exploitation, which supports the study of Ferris (2007). Nardon *et al.*, 2021 affirmed that single mothers are more vulnerable and marginalized, thereby facing all sorts

of exploitation as they try to provide for themselves and their children. Allsopp, Sigona and Phillimore (2014) state that refugee single mothers are subjected to hardships, lack of security, joblessness, isolation, and poverty. These relatives expose them to exploitation and abuse. Refugee single mothers strive to get sustainable employment and provide for their families but endure particular challenges like discrimination and exploitation (Aubé *et al.*, 2019).

5.3.3 Research Question three

The third research question was restated thus:

What future provisions need to be made available for refugee single mothers regarding their well-being, employability and financial stability to alleviate the issue of social exclusion and exploitation?

The participants shared wide-ranging narratives of support available to some single refugee mothers, which they have received, as well as other help they could get. Though based on facts, the results of this question vary with all the participants based on their particular narratives. While most of the respondents were grateful for the support they received during the pandemic, their responses also indicated that more could be done to improve their standard of life and help them integrate effectively into their new environment.

Some recommendations indicated areas such as job availability and easy access to them, among others. Diana recommended that provision of more information for parents with autistic kids needs to be available. Diana, Francesca, Trisha and Unis suggested more childcare services. Specifically, Unis recommended that "more money should be given to them to give their children all their needed care and support." She also mentioned that "more rights to better education should be given to refugee single mothers and that not having a permanent status should not come in the way of

education and some other social services for refugee single mothers." Diana also proposed more financial help for a parent with a child with disabilities.

According to Diana, refugee discrimination should be given more attention. She stated, "Some of us are educated and should be allowed to get professional jobs." Diana provided that priority should be given to depression among refugees. Agnes recommended that adopting technology as a physical exercise tool will be helpful in case of a future incident. Additionally, Diana also proposed more transportation help. She added that kids with special needs should be in a school that could cater to their needs, not a public school like other kids, as they experience bullying. Francesca recommended that "single refugee mothers should not be discriminated against in employment opportunities." From these various suggestions, it is obvious. Although she agreed she received some support, she mentioned that the support was not enough and recommended that more donations and support be made available and served equally to all people.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative narrative study was to explore how the pandemic impacted the experiences of refugee single mothers in Ottawa. The study adopted social exclusion theory as the theoretical framework to support the research and conceptualize the participants' experiences through the interview process. The motivation for this study is the scarcity of empirical studies on the experiences of refugee single mothers, especially in Ottawa, regarding job prospects within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Also, my motivation for this study was my personal experience as a single mother. The study, therefore, adopted the narrative design as the most appropriate research method for this study. It was used to collect data from the respondent, which was analyzed to provide answers to the research questions. The method provided participants with the opportunity to tell their stories in their natural environment, from which five significant themes were identified through the critical review of the transcripts from of interviews:

- 1) Refugee single mothers' socioeconomic status before the pandemic
- 2) Pandemic effect on well-being and employment of refugee single mother
- 3) Support available to refugee single mothers
- 4) Suggestions for the improved livelihood of refugee single mother
- 5) Exploitation.

The themes were used to construct interview questions that answered the three research questions.

6.2 Summary of Findings

The findings from this qualitative narrative study provide implications that suggest that the refugee single mothers that participated in this study viewed the effect of Covid-19, such as the lockdowns, to have harmed their general well-being. This situation has left many single refugee mothers who may already have limited protection from the virus with a loss of economic means, which increases their grievances and insecurity, including sexual and gender-based violence. The findings of the study are stated thus;

- i. The Covid-19 pandemic influenced access to income necessary for acquiring basic and material needs due to opportunities and quality of jobs available for refugee single mothers. It was supported by stories of six participants who narrated how they were limited from getting jobs because, as single mothers, there were no daycare provisions for their children to give them time to work. The social exclusion theory affirms it with respect to social rights exclusion.
- ii. The Covid-19 pandemic influenced the employment services rendered to refugee single mothers with regard to increased exploitation faced by refugee single mothers in Ottawa, Canada. It was supported by the stories of five out of the six participants who narrated how they were marginalized because of their gender and status as refugees. It primarily resulted in exploitations though most participants were uncomfortable providing details of the exploitations they experienced.
- iii. The study findings suggested future provisions that need to be made available for refugee single mothers in terms of their well-being, employability and financial stability and to alleviate the issue of social exclusion and exploitation. These formed the base for the recommendations provided at the end of this study.

6.3 Discussion of Findings

These findings align with the social exclusion theory, which asserts that certain people, like single refugee mothers, are marginalized because of their gender and status as refugees. Social exclusion theory, as related to refugee single mothers in Canada, explains the phenomenon whereby, during the Covid-19 period, some refugee single mothers became isolated from their families while raising their children in a different culture. This social excision has a more negative effect on the well-being of single mothers and various forms of exploitation of single refugee mothers. Even as refugee single mothers strive to get sustainable employment and provide for their families, they endure particular challenges like discrimination and exploitation (Aubé *et al.*, 2019). For example, this study has confirmed that the exploitation of single refugee mother communities in Canada has affected the well-being of this group of people and their children in various ways. However, it limited in ways including limiting their access to education and employment, increasing their sense of isolation, and lowering their self-esteem.

Discrimination is an interpersonal activity related to the unfair treatment of others based on perceived social differences (Fish & Syed, 2019). In Canada, single refugee mothers face multiple challenges. Some policies like the Canada child benefit have undoubtedly contributed to the low rates of integration of refugees into the community and the high rates of human rights abuses that affect refugee single mothers and their children (Canada Revenue Agency [C.R.A.], 2022). For example, while refugee single mothers are claimants, they cannot access Canadian child benefits because they are not permanent residents or protected persons. As a result, refugee single mothers need to find ways to maintain a stable home and family because of the precarious nature of their situation. Furthermore, refugee single mothers must be able to access employment and the opportunity to be recognized as full members of society. It should be done in a way that protects

their rights and meets their personal and health needs. Until this happens, the trend of exclusion and exploitation will continue with undesirable consequences.

6.4 Recommendations for Practice

Refugee single mothers are a peculiar set of people faced with multiple challenges, such as their refugee status, single parenting condition, and gender. The unemployment rate of refugee single mothers is higher than that of other migrants. The participants in this qualitative narrative study knew their condition needed all stakeholders' attention. Therefore, creating an environment where refugee single mothers can freely have equal opportunities to means of livelihood can develop a sense of community.

If refugee single mothers are able to become self-sufficient while waiting for a solution to be found and implemented, it will be simpler for them to access a long-lasting standard of living. Self-reliance typically entails allowing refugees access to the host nation's economy, particularly the labour market. In addition, refugees can learn to support themselves through education, microfinance, language instruction, vocational training, access to suitable housing, and social services.

The government can promote this independence during the asylum process, before granting refugee status, and while waiting for a long-lasting solution. When the government acknowledges the refugee status, the range of advantages and access provided can be increased. In order to make the time between arrival, acknowledgement of refugee status, and finding long-lasting solutions productive for both the refugees and the host community, self-reliance over an extended period is the first recommendation.

Another recommendation is to provide complete health coverage for all refugee single mother and their children regardless of their migration status. Through this intervention, the economic burden on refugee single mothers would be less.

It is also vital to provide financial and employment support and services that fulfil the predominant policies of gender equity by integrating migrants into any employment plan with awareness of their diversity and different needs without stigmatizing or exclusion.

6.5 Recommendations for Further Study

This study, which was centred on a single refugee mother, provided helpful insight into their means of livelihood experience during the pandemic was improved as a result of the research. It is necessary to do additional research to consider possible directions for future studies because this study concentrated on one aspect related to the research subject with some limitations. The study only interviews six available participants, and future studies should increase the sample size to increase its generalization. In addition, further study should investigate the culture of education as a means of residence permit and its impact on refugee single mothers. Furthermore, future studies could explore if refugee single mother knowledge and skills affect the standard of living and employment opportunities

6.6 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore how the pandemic impacted the experiences of refugee single mothers in Ottawa regarding job prospects. The findings from the study reveal that refugee single mothers are affected by the consequences of Covid-19, like the lockdown. In addition, it left many single refugee mothers who may already have limited protection from the virus with a loss of economic means, which increases their grievances and insecurity, including sexual and gender-

based violence. Finally, understanding the concept of discrimination and exploitation among refugee single mothers in Canada is required to understand the complex social and economic circumstances these individuals face. Refugee single mothers must be able to access employment and the opportunity to be recognized as full members of society, which needs to be done in a way that both protects their rights and meets their needs and their health prescription.

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APPENDICES

ANNEX A

Masters research on the Experiences of Refugee single mothers during the Covid-19 pandemic in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

ARE YOU A REFUGEE SINGLE MOTHER
~~WHO IS EITHER A CLAIMANT, CONVENTIONAL
REFUGEE OR CLAIMANT REJECTED PERSON?~~

IF YES IS YOUR ANSWER THEN THIS RESEARCH
IS FOR YOU THEN

RESEARCH

This research objective is to
establish and understand the
effect of the COVID-19
pandemic on refugee single
mothers' experiences in Canada.

ELIGIBILITY

- Over 25 years of age
- A refugee single mother
- Be available for a 1-2
hour interview in-person
or online



KINDLY CONTACT Aderonke on
aosob029@uottawa.ca for
more information

ANNEX B



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of the study: The Experiences of Refugee single mothers during the Covid-19 pandemic in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Name of researcher: ADERONKE OSOBAJO

THESIS SUPERVISOR: JAMEL STAMBOULI

Master of Arts in Social Innovation

Élisabeth-Bruyère School of Social Innovation Faculty of Human Sciences Saint Paul University

Invitation to Participate: I am inviting you to participate in the abovementioned research study conducted by Aderonke Osobajo for her thesis. Jamel Stambouli of Saint Paul University supervises the research. Please carefully read the remaining part of this recruitment letter to understand the purpose of the study and how you can contribute.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to understand the effects of Covid-19 on refugee single mothers in Canada

Participation: You will be in a one-on-one in-person interview with the researcher. It will be semi-structured interviews with preselected questions in which the researcher may ask some

random follow-up questions to probe for more details. It will allow me to explore areas that may arise from the interview. The interviews will take 90 to 120 minutes which will be happening online on Zoom with the audio recording after taking the participant's consent. It will take place in Ottawa and with an option of a follow-up interview if necessary. You will be asked a series of questions regarding your experiences as a single mother during the Covid-19 pandemic.

I hope to start interviewing participants on February 25th, 2022 and end by March 5th, 2022.

You may withdraw from the research up until the start of the data analysis on March 31st, 2022.

A reminder of the right to withdraw will also be done at the beginning of the interview. The researcher will provide the final reports of this research.

Risks: Your participation in this research will require you to volunteer information about your experiences as a refugee single mother in Canada. This interview will be conducted safely, accepting, and with compassion. However, there could be minimal emotional risk for participants when it comes to talking about their experiences and coping mechanisms due to them seeing me as one of them and thus believing I should share their plight. If this happens, I intend to use the breath in and out method to help calm the situation. Furthermore, you can refuse to answer questions you do not want to answer or feel comfortable sharing.

I expect the emotional risks to be minimal. Still, if it goes above the minimal level and an emergency occurs, the interview will be stopped, and the researcher will secure emergency services. Contact information for mental health support services will also be given to participants if we discuss topics that would make them experience any discomfort during the interview.

Lastly, the number and website (613-722-6914 www.crisisline.ca) of the crisis helpline will be given to participants at the end of each interview, should it be needed.

Benefits: Your participation in this study will provide an essential contribution to understanding the experiences of refugee single mothers in Canada during the Covid-19 pandemic. This knowledge will contribute academically and personally to the benefit of refugee single mothers in Canada. Furthermore, participants will share their personal experiences on how they coped during the pandemic. It will award you the opportunity to share your personal stories, which will help women who may find themselves in the same position in the future. The researcher may receive economic benefits by working for social enterprises, NGOs, or probably other paid jobs.

Confidentiality and Anonymity: The researcher will assure you that any information you share will be in confidence and that efforts will be taken to protect your anonymity, including your name and your employer's name. Any information obtained from this interview can be used for academic publications, conferences, workshops, seminars, publishing content on social media, personal coaching of individuals, and other reports.

All data and information gotten will be protected in the following manner;

1. The audio recordings of the interviews will be transcribed using pseudonyms to remain confidential.
2. Identifying descriptions such as age, gender, race, job position, and other narratives will not be used when sharing your experiences and information and answering any questions.

Conservation of data: The data collected, including digital recordings, transcripts, and notes, will be kept in a secure environment. You (participants) will get to choose a pseudonym when you sign the consent form, which will be kept at the research supervisor's office. The names will also be kept separately from audio recordings and other documents. All audio recordings of interviews will be kept in the private house of the researcher. The audio recorder and all other

documents, excluding the list of pseudonyms, will be kept in a locked box in the researcher's home closet. The audio file and typed transcripts will be locked with a password on the hard drive of a computer desktop in the researcher's home. Data will be destroyed five years after the research is completed. All the paper documents will be shredded, and soft copies will be wiped on the system used to save the data information. The audiotapes will be broken into pieces and recycled.

Voluntary Participation: You are not obligated to participate, and if you choose to participate, you can withdraw from the study until the beginning of the data analysis on March 31st, 2022. In addition, refusing to answer any questions will not have any adverse effects. Furthermore, if you withdraw from this research, all the collected data and documents will be permanently deleted and destroyed.

Acceptance: I agree that my consent to participate in this research will not compel me to do anything I do not want to do and that I do not give up my rights. I have been thoroughly informed about all aspects of this research, and my questions have been answered.

There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep safely

The Research Ethics Board has approved this research, and if you have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, You may contact the Office of Research and Ethics, Saint Paul University, 223 Main Street, Ottawa, ON K1S 1C4 Tel.: (613) 236-1393

Participant's signature: (Signature)

Date: (Date)

I have permitted this interview to be audio recorded using the recording functions on zoom or with a portable digital recorder if we are recording in person. The researcher will be the only person with access to the recordings.

Researcher's signature: (Signature)

Date: (Date)

ANNEX C

Hello, my name is Aderonke. I am a student in the Social Innovation Department of Saint Paul University Ottawa. Today we will have a question and answer (interview) session on my thesis, "The Experiences of Refugee single mothers during the Covid-19 pandemic in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada." I intend to understand the experiences of refugee single mothers in Canada, especially during this Covid19 pandemic, and how they have survived.

I will be protecting your identity as it will not be linked to you, except if you want me to state your name in my report or if I get to know a form of abuse has occurred or presently happening, or if there is any form of threat to life your life or mine. Everything you say will be confidential; however, I may be taking notes to help me with my report at the end of this interview session, and it will be destroyed once all reports are computed. Below is where you will sign after reading what I explained in the consent form. After signing the consent form, we can begin the session. Please be free to stop me anytime if you are uncomfortable with my question, and always let me know if you need any break.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When did you migrate to seek asylum (refugee status) in Canada?

- Are you now a refugee claimant or a conventional refugee?
- When did you become a single mother?
- What is life like being a refugee single mother in Canada?

2. What were the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown experiences for you as a refugee single mother in Canada?

- What were your general survival experiences like during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown?
- What were your experiences like in caring for your children during the pandemic?
- What did you do in caring for yourself regarding your health and life generally during the pandemic?

3. How did the Covid- 19 pandemic impact your income generally?

- How did the Covid-19 pandemic influence access to income necessary for acquiring the basic needs and material needs resulting from opportunities and quality of jobs available for refugee single mothers?
- How did the Covid-19 pandemic influence the employment services rendered to refugee single mothers regarding increased exploitation faced by refugee single mothers in Ottawa, Canada?

4. What support received during the pandemic stood out for you either from the government, communities or other individuals?

- Did you receive enough support to help you during the pandemic
- What support or provisions did you wish were available during the pandemic but were not available?

5. What future provision needs to be made available for refugee single mothers?

- What future provisions do you think are more needed regarding refugee single mothers' well-being?

- What provisions will help Employability and financial stability to alleviate the issue of social exclusion and exploitation?

Thank you for meeting with me today, Mrs. XY, and having this session. I will provide you with the report before a final submission so you can review it. Can I contact you for more questions or discussions on your experiences? Thank you very much for your time, have a great day ahead.

ANNEX D



UNIVERSITÉ
SAINT-PAUL
UNIVERSITY



CERTIFICAT D'ÉTHIQUE ETHICS CERTIFICATE

1360.24/21 - Aderonke Osobajo

The Experiences of Refugee single mothers during the Covid-19 pandemic in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.



April 27, 2022

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